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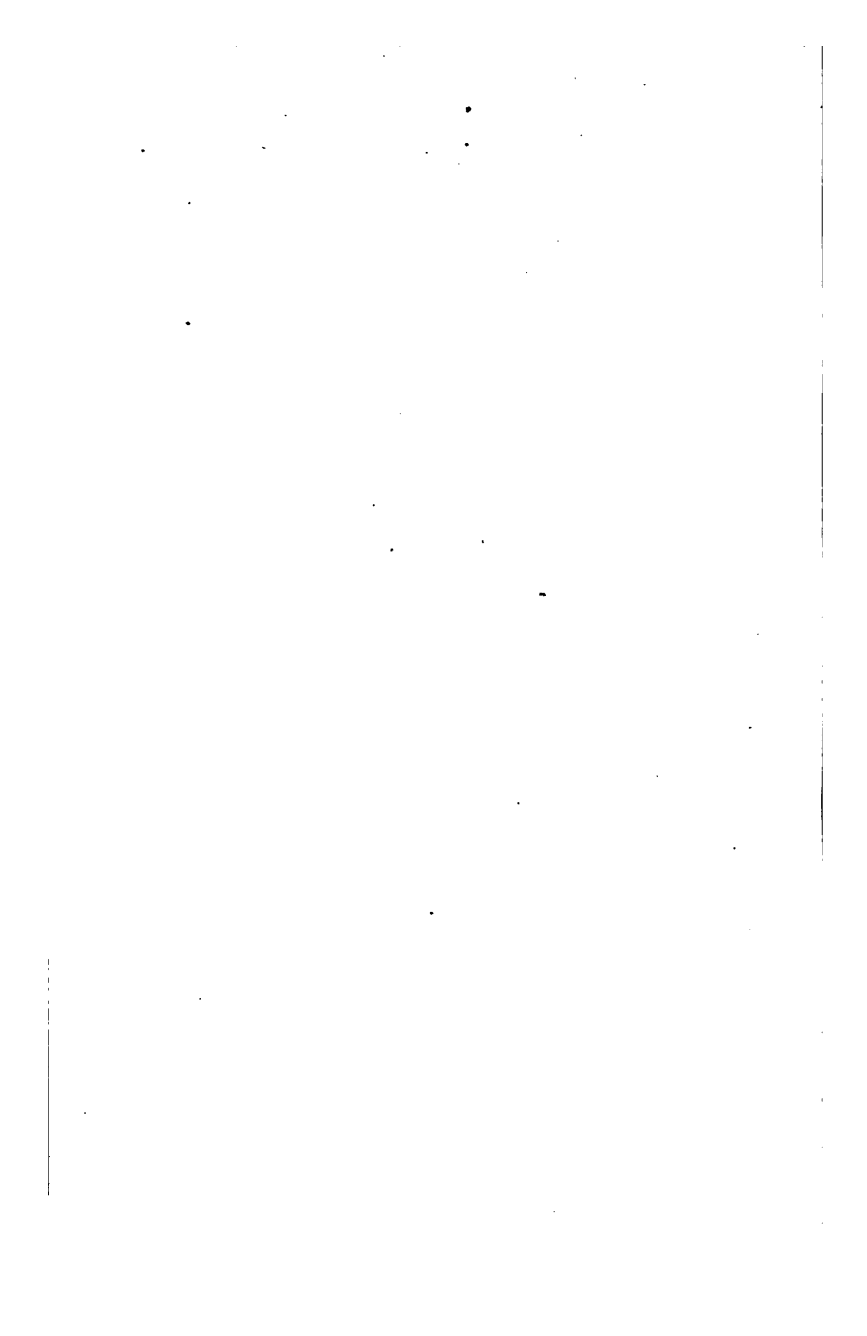
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THE APOSTLES OF JESUS.







They looked steadfastly toward Heaven as he went up.

ACTS I. 10



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vi. y. 207.



THE
APOSTLES OF JESUS.

BY MRS CLERE.

"The glorious company of the Apostles praise thee."

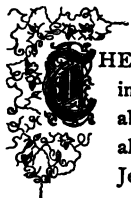
SECOND EDITION.



LONDON:
HATCHARD & CO., 187 PICCADILLY,
Booksellers to H.R.H. the Princess of Wales.
1868.

101. g. 239.

P R E F A C E.



THE authoress of the following pages, having been informed that no book written in a style suitable for general readers, giving an account of all that is known of the Apostles of the blessed Jesus, had been published, thought, perhaps presumptuously, that she could supply the want, and at once undertook to do so. In the performance of her task, she has studied simplicity and clearness, and has confined herself, almost entirely, to facts gathered from the Holy Scriptures, and to such information as the best ecclesiastical historians give. The reader must bear in mind that any incidents in the lives of the Apostles not recorded in the New Testament have been handed down to us through uninspired writers, and therefore must be received, as all other history, according to the credibility of the authors. The engraving is from a painting by Sir George Hayter. Whatever fault the critic may find with her book, the authoress has the satisfaction of knowing that she has done her best; and if, by the perusal of "The Apostles of Jesus," a deeper feeling of love and veneration is excited in the hearts of her readers for Him in whose footsteps the holy Apostles so closely trod, she will be abundantly recompensed.

TICKENHAM VICARAGE,
March 15, 1868.

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THE
APOSTLES OF JESUS.

SAINT PETER.

COLLECT FOR SAINT PETER'S DAY.

O ALMIGHTY GOD, who, by thy Son Jesus Christ, didst give to thy Apostle Saint Peter many excellent gifts, and commandedst him earnestly to feed thy flock ; Make, we beseech thee, all Bishops and Pastors diligently to preach thy holy Word, and the people obediently to follow the same, that they may receive the crown of everlasting glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



IN the western shore of the Sea of Galilee lay Bethsaida, a city deeply interesting to all Christians as having been the birth-place of several of the Apostles, and afterwards the scene of many of the mighty works of Jesus. Here, in a dwelling perhaps scarcely better than the stable at

Bethlehem, the great Apostle St Peter first saw the light. How little would the humble Jona and his wife imagine, as they looked upon their infant son, that when he became a man he would be a chosen companion, friend, and Apostle of the long looked-for Messiah!

I am compelled, though unwillingly, to pass over the youthful days of Simon, (the name given to this Apostle by his parents,) no particulars of them having been handed down to us. His father Jona was very poor, and is generally believed to have been a fisherman; and we may readily suppose that his sons, at a very early age, assisted him in his dangerous calling. It is thought that Simon was about ten years old when Jesus was born, so possibly he and his father were fishing on the Lake of Tiberias when the angel of the Lord appeared to the shepherds of Bethlehem, and told them the joyful news that the Saviour was born. No divine intimation, so far as we know, had the fishermen of Galilee that night of the birth of the Redeemer. But perhaps they, to whom every star would be familiar, pointed out to each other a brilliant meteor they had never seen before. Ah! little thought they then that that star was guiding the sages of the East to the cradle of the infant Saviour. In after years, when the events of that wondrous night became known, they would often,

perhaps, remind each other of the star of Bethlehem. In the sacred history, years intervene between that time and the period when Simon is first introduced to us. Years they were to the poor fisherman of toil and hardship, still not without their blessings. Domestic ties had Simon formed, and there was a dear wife, and it is believed children, to welcome him home after his nights of labour. He had quitted the parental roof, and had removed, it is supposed, on the occasion of his marriage to Capernaum. But thoughts higher and nobler than those connected with the pleasures of the domestic hearth, or the dangers and hardships of his calling, occupied the active mind of Simon. A mighty preacher had appeared on the banks of the Jordan who proclaimed that the Messiah was at hand. The glorious news reached the ears of the sons of Jona. Andrew, and it is believed Simon also, went to hear the Baptist in the wilderness. Certain it is that the brothers were among the first to welcome Jesus when he appeared to John and his disciples, they believing him to be the Christ, the Saviour of the world. It was Andrew who had first the honour of conversing with Jesus, but no sooner had he left the presence of our Lord than he sought his "brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the

Christ."¹ Willingly did Simon accompany his brother to the place where Jesus was, who no sooner saw him than he said to him, "Thou shalt be called Cephas."² Cephas in Syriac means a stone or rock; Petros in Greek also means a stone or rock; and so Simon was sometimes called Cephas, but much more generally Peter. This name was given him by our Lord as an honourable title, denoting the firmness and constancy for which, through the grace given him, his faith would be generally noted, and which would distinguish his labours and sufferings in the cause of Christ.

Peter did not at his first interview remain long with our Saviour. Oh, what joyful news had the poor fisherman to tell his dear ones at home when he returned to Capernaum. Can we not imagine his wife listening in wondering silence to her husband's account of his meeting with the Lord, while her aged mother would pray that she might, ere she closed her eyes in death, be blessed with the sight of him whom prophets and kings had long desired to see?

We hear nothing more of Peter for a year, but we may suppose, that though during that period he continued to pursue his calling as a fisherman, he spent much of his time in the society of Jesus.

¹ John i. 41.

² John i. 42.

Nay, it is not at all improbable that our Lord made the abode of Peter his home whenever he stayed in Capernaum, even before the time when he miraculously cured Peter's mother-in-law. During this year Jesus had been actively employed in his ministry, not alone in Capernaum, but in the region round about, preaching the gospel, healing the sick, and casting out devils. His fame had spread not only throughout Galilee, but in the countries beyond, and multitudes flocked after him wherever he went. We read that they not only followed him, but "pressed upon him"¹ in their great anxiety to hear the word of God. In Jerusalem, the people heard of Jesus, and went to Galilee to hear him. In Syria, the people heard of Jesus, and went to Galilee to hear him. The Tyrians and Sidonians left their coasts and flocked to the shores of Tiberias to listen to the tidings of salvation. Distance with these poor sinners seemed to be no consideration. How different it is with many professing Christians at the present day! Let the house of God be only a mile or two from their homes, and their constant excuse for not attending upon his service is that the length of the way is wearisome.

Our Saviour one day, to avoid the crowd, stepped into a boat which lay on the beach.

¹ Luke v. 1.

This boat belonged to the brothers Peter and Andrew, but they were not in her. They were, however, near on the shore, washing their nets after a night of fruitless toil. Jesus asked Peter to "thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship."¹ After he had done speaking, he told Peter to launch the boat into deeper water, and let the net into the sea. Peter replied that he had been toiling all night, which is the best time for fishing, and had caught nothing. However, as Jesus had bidden him, he let down the net.

" 'The livelong night we've toil'd in vain,
But at thy gracious word
I will let down the net again':—
Do thou thy will, O Lord !'

" So spake the weary fisher, spent
With bootless darkling toil,
Yet on his Master's bidding bent
For love and not for spoil."

His obedience was well rewarded, for immediately the net enclosed so many fishes that they could not draw them up into the boat, and they beckoned to their partners, James and John, who were in another ship, to come and help them. When all the fishes were drawn up they filled both the ships.

¹ Luke v. 3.

Peter was so struck with the divine power of Jesus, that he fell down at his feet and exclaimed, "Depart from me ; for I am a sinful man, O Lord !" ¹ He felt himself altogether unworthy of being near so great a personage. But Jesus said, "Fear not ; from henceforth thou shalt catch men." ² And how did he succeed ? If you will look at the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, you will see that he was in one day the blessed means of bringing three thousand souls to the Lord Jesus Christ.

From this time Peter became the constant companion of our Saviour, who soon gave him another proof of his divine power and favour. It was this : The home of Peter, at that time the honoured abode of our Lord, was visited by fever. Peter's wife's mother, who, it would appear, resided with her daughter and son-in-law, was seized with the deadly malady. No time, however, was lost in letting Jesus know of her illness. He was in the city, healing the sick and casting out devils, but he no sooner heard of the calamity which had befallen Peter's household, than he went to the bedside of the sick woman, "and stood over her, and rebuked the fever ; and it left her." ³ Yes, it left her ! Not, as you might think, weak, and needing rest, but so well that she could at once wait upon

¹ Luke v. 8.² Luke v. 10.³ Luke iv. 39.

Jesus and his disciples, for we read that "immediately she arose and ministered unto them."¹

Not long after this Jesus chose his twelve Apostles. The word Apostle means a person sent forth. To these favoured ones, among whom was Peter, our Saviour gave "power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease."² Intimately associated with Jesus were all the Apostles, but three of them were specially selected by our Lord to be his constant companions. They were Peter, James, and John, who were often allowed to remain with their divine Master when he desired the other Apostles to leave him, or withdrew himself from them. The first time he showed this mark of favour was when he restored the daughter of Jairus to life. The story is this: There was a great man, a ruler of the synagogue of Capernaum, called Jairus. He had a daughter, about twelve years of age, whom he loved very much. Now this dear child was very ill, indeed dying. Jairus had, of course, heard of the wonderful things Jesus had done; so he went to the shore of the Sea of Galilee, where our Lord was, and fell down at his feet, entreating him to go directly to his daughter and lay his hands on her, that she might live. Jesus at once went with him,

¹ Luke iv. 39.

² Matt. x. 1.

his disciples accompanying him, and a great number of people following. Before the anxious father, however, could reach home, a servant met him with the tidings that his daughter was dead. This was sad news, but Jairus had a friend near who could at once cheer him with the words, "Be not afraid; only believe."¹ Jesus allowed no one to proceed any further with him, excepting Jairus, Peter, James, and John. When they reached the ruler's house, the minstrels were playing, and the people making lamentations for the dead, as was the custom in that country when any one of great consequence died. Jesus told them that the maid only slept, but "they laughed him to scorn."² Did their eyes deceive them? Could those stiffened limbs and pale and rigid features belong to any but one from whom the soul had departed? No! they could not believe that she only slept. Soon, however, their scorn was to be turned into astonishment. Jesus put them all out, and with only the father and mother of the maid, and Peter, James, and John, he entered the room where the damsel lay, and, taking her by the hand, "said unto her, *Talitha cumi*; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise. And straightway the damsel arose and walked."³ Can you be surprised to read that "they were astonished with a

¹ Mark v. 36.² Mark v. 40.³ Mark v. 41, 42.

great astonishment?"¹ Peter ought by this time to have had most perfect confidence in the power of Jesus under all circumstances; but soon his faith was tried till it wavered. He was one night with the other Apostles in a ship on the sea of Galilee. It was dark. They were toiling in rowing; for the wind was against them. Jesus was not with them; he was on a mountain, praying. A violent storm arose, and Peter and his friends were in great danger. They continued in this state of fear and distress till after three o'clock in the morning, when they saw a figure walking on the raging sea towards them. This figure was none other than Jesus, but they did not know him. Their terror was very great, for they thought it was a spirit. Jesus came close to the ship in order that they might see him distinctly; but still they did not know him, and they cried out with fear. The Saviour immediately said, "It is I; be not afraid."² No sooner did Peter hear the voice of his beloved Master, than he begged to be allowed to go to him. Jesus gave him permission. Peter got out of the ship, and walked on the sea towards Jesus; before, however, he reached him, he began to be afraid. Perhaps a high wave arose between them, and prevented him for a moment seeing the Lord. Be that as it may, his faith wavered; and, as he lost his faith,

¹ Mark v. 42.² Matt. xiv. 27.

he lost his footing, and began to sink. Then, in an agony, he cried out, "Lord, save me!"¹ Jesus stretched out his hand and caught him; at the same time reproving him for his want of faith. Jesus and Peter entered the ship; the wind ceased, and immediately the ship reached the shore. Then all that were in the ship worshipped Jesus, and said, "Of a truth thou art the Son of God."²

I am sure you will suppose that the disciples could not help thinking Jesus was, indeed, the Son of God; and yet, the very next day after he had been walking on the sea, he told them that some of them did not believe; but Peter assured him that he and the rest of the Apostles believed that he was the Christ, the Son of the living God. Our Lord knew better than Peter did what was in the hearts of those about him, and although he did not tell them all he knew, he replied, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?"³ Judas was among them.

One day, when Jesus was walking with his disciples, he said to them, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

Matt. xiv. 30.

² Matt. xiv. 33.

³ John vi. 70.

And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona : for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church ; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven : and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven : and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”¹ Our Saviour here confirms to the son of Jona the title he had before given him, “Thou art Peter,” a stone or rock. Jesus then goes on to say, “and upon this rock (that is upon the confession* which Peter had made that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God) I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” The last few words are understood by some to mean that all the assaults and attempts which the powers of darkness can make against Christ’s Church shall not be able to overthrow it. And by others the expression, “gates of hell,” is understood to signify death as the entrance into hades, or the place of

¹ Matt. xvi. 13-19.

* This view is favoured by the changing of the Greek word *petros* in this text into *pet. a.*

departed spirits. Securely as these gates may be barred, they shall have no power to confine Christ's departed saints when the archangel shall sound the trump of judgment, but all that are within those gates shall hear the voice of the Son of God and come forth. You are aware, I suppose, that all who were not Jews were called Gentiles. God intended the Jewish religion only for his own peculiar people; but the religion of Jesus Christ was for the whole world, Jews and Gentiles. Christianity broke down the middle-wall of partition between them, and the kingdom of heaven was opened to all believers. Now, the keys of the kingdom of heaven being given to Peter by our Lord, means that it should be his happy lot to be the first to open the door of Christ's kingdom to the Gentiles, and persuade them to enter in, and become participators in the glorious privileges of the gospel. In the seventh verse of the fifteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles we find Peter reminding the members of the council of the Apostles of this. But the way being opened by Peter, preaching to and baptizing the Gentiles was not confined to him, as you will read hereafter. The expression, "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven," means that Jesus gave Peter power to retain or do away with

whatever portion of the Mosaic law relating to ceremonies the circumstances of his religion might require. The power which is here confined to things was afterwards extended by our Lord to persons, (John xx. 23.) The authority given to Peter was not restricted to him, but was given to the other Apostles also. "Whatsoever *ye* shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven : and whatsoever *ye* shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven,"¹ said our Saviour, when conversing with his disciples on a future occasion. In the Talmud, a book highly valued by the Jews, the words to bind and to loose are used in the same manner as above, namely, to retain or do away with anything. The extended expression of our Lord relates to the authority the Apostles possessed as the representatives of Christ. The Apostles themselves had not, except when the power was specially given to them, an infallible insight into the characters of men ; but they were kept from error in stating the way of salvation, and in administering the discipline of the Church. In such cases their decision was confirmed by their great Master in heaven.

When Jesus first told his disciples that he would have to suffer many things, and be put to death at Jerusalem, Peter, who could not bear to hear him say so, rebuked him with the words, "Be it far

¹ Matt. xviii. 18.

from thee,"¹ or, God forbid it. Peter and the rest of the Apostles had still a hope that Jesus would reign as a great king in this world. But Jesus, turning to Peter, said unto him, "Get thee behind me, Satan ; thou art an offence to me, for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."² Satan here signifies an enemy, and the word offence a hindrance ; so our Saviour meant to say that Peter, led away with human weakness, would place a hindrance in his way, and tempt him from the path of sorrow which he must tread if mankind were to be saved.

A few days after this the transfiguration on the mount took place. Within about two hours' walk from Nazareth is Tabor, a mountain rising out of the valley of Esdraelon (Jezreel), and celebrated in the Old Testament history as having been the spot selected by Deborah whereon Barak was to assemble his army of ten thousand men before giving battle to Sisera. This mountain is supposed to have been the one on which our Saviour was transfigured. It is described by modern travellers as being about a mile in height, and its sides rugged and precipitous. The shape of the mountain is that of a cone with the top cut off, the summit being a plain about a mile in circumference.

"And it came to pass, about an eight days after

¹ Matt. xvi. 22.

² Matt. xvi. 23.

these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering. And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias : who appeared in glory and spake of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep.”¹ The apostles slept though it was day. Perhaps the journey up the steep and rugged mountain had taxed their strength too much, and when they reached the top they yielded to the sense of fatigue. Oh, what conflicting feelings must have been theirs when they awoke, and beheld the glorious sight of Christ transfigured ! Amazement, joy, and devotion would fill their breasts as they looked upon their beloved Lord, clothed with divine splendour, and attended by two heavenly beings. But, alas ! what did their ears hear ? That the face of their dear Master, then shining as the sun, must be insultingly spat upon by his enemies, and disfigured by cruel blows ; that his temples, then radiant with glory, must be pricked with a thorny crown ; that his garments, then glistening with celestial brightness, must be stripped from off his holy body, and be divided among rude soldiers ; and that, as he was then

¹ Luke ix. 28-32.

seen between two saints, he would afterwards be seen between two malefactors.

No two such fitting companions as Moses and Elias could have been found in heaven to attend upon our Saviour when he was glorified upon earth, the one representing the law and the other the prophets. Both of them were noted throughout their lives for their faith and holiness; both were types of Christ; both fasted forty days; both suffered much for the glory of God; both divided the waters; both were the messengers of God to kings; both heard the voice of God in Horeb, and both were wonderful in the mode of their departure from this world.

Moses and Elias appeared as attendants upon the glorified Jesus, to show the agreement of the law and the prophets with Christ, and their fulfilment in him.

It is evident that the impression made upon Peter by what he saw on the mount was greater than that produced upon him by what he heard, for he (supposing that Christ had begun to reign on earth, and that Elias had come as Malachi had foretold he should) said, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias."¹ It was the deeply-rooted opinion

¹ Matt. xvii. 4.

of all the disciples that, even after the introduction of the gospel, the whole of the Mosaic law, both moral and ceremonial, would be retained in conjunction with the law of Christ. Now, one of the designs of the transfiguration was to show Peter, James, and John that they were in error on this point. When they awoke, and saw Moses, the Jewish Lawgiver, and Elijah, or Elias, the chief of the prophets, talking with Jesus, they would naturally conclude that they were right in their opinion ; so Peter, ever ready with his speech, proposed that all three, Jesus, Moses, and Elias, should make the holy mount their place of abode. But even while he yet spake, a bright cloud, the Shekinah, or Divine presence, overshadowed them. "And, behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased ; hear ye him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid."¹ Moses and Elias vanished. St Mark tells us that "*suddenly*, when they (Peter, James, and John) had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only."² There stood their unrivalled and undisputed sovereign, whom they were to hear, not Moses nor Elias, but he whom God had just declared was his beloved Son. They were to hear him and him alone, the great Prophet and Teacher

¹ Matt. xvii. 5, 6.² Mark ix. 8.

of the Church of God. They were to adore him and him alone as their Saviour, and obey him and him alone as their Lawgiver and King.

Much might be written upon this subject that could not fail to interest you. I must, however, confine myself to a few remarks. Tabor has been called the Gospel Sinai, and the resemblance between the transactions which took place on the two mountains, Sinai and Tabor, is striking. On the former, the law was given by God to Moses; on the latter, God preached the gospel to the three disciples. When Moses went up into Sinai, not even the priests were allowed to go up with him; when Jesus went up Tabor, his attendants were not suffered to accompany him, except the three favoured ones as witnesses. On Sinai the face of Moses shone when God talked with him; on Tabor the face of Jesus shone as the sun. Out of the midst of a cloud on Sinai, Moses heard the voice of God; out of the midst of a cloud on Tabor, Peter, James, and John heard the voice of God. But there was this difference, the cloud on Sinai was a thick one, that on Tabor a bright one. There was darkness in the law, but light in the gospel. The people at the foot of Sinai trembled when they heard the thunderings and the noise of the trumpet, and saw the lightnings and the mountain smoking. Peter, James, and John feared

when they entered the cloud on Tabor. And, lastly, Moses encouraged the people with the words, "Fear not;"¹ and Jesus comforted the three Apostles with the words, "Be not afraid."²

So long as the world endureth will these two mountains remain as monuments of the terrible majesty and the exceeding great love of our Father in heaven. Neither you nor I, dear reader, will probably ever, like some of our more privileged countrymen, ascend Sinai or Tabor. But we are all, I trust, journeying to the heavenly Zion, (which is far better,) where we shall see the blessed Jesus, the glorified Redeemer, attended not only by Moses and Elias, but by a great multitude which cannot be numbered. Oh, may we then be ready to exclaim, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever!"³

The venerable Bede tells us that, in accordance with St Peter's wish, there were afterwards built three churches on the top of Tabor, which in later times were held in great veneration.

Peter, James, and John remained with our Saviour all night on the mountain. The other Apostles were in the valley below. And you will agree with me, if you will read the ninth chapter of St Luke, that it must have been a most welcome

¹ Exod. xx. 20.

² Matt. xvii. 7.

³ Rev. v. 13.

sight to the nine, that of Jesus descending Tabor with the three greatly favoured ones; even Judas would be glad to see the Lord to help him with the rest out of a difficulty.

Shortly after this our Saviour and his Apostles arrived at Capernaum, and "they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your Master pay tribute? He saith, Yes."¹ The tribute of half a shekel (equal to fifteenpence of our money) was commanded by God to be paid annually by every Jew above twenty years of age. This money was to be devoted to the service of the tabernacle, (and of course afterwards to the service of the temple,) and with it was bought everything that was necessary for public worship. No sooner had Peter answered the tribute gatherers than he went into his house where Jesus was. Our Lord, though inside the dwelling, knew what had passed in the street, and before Peter could speak said, "What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free."² When a king subdued a country, and laid a tribute upon the inhabitants, he did not tax his own people or children who might happen afterwards to live in that coun-

¹ Matt. xvii. 24, 25.

² Matt. xvii. 25, 26.

try, but the strangers whom he had conquered. So Jesus argued that, as earthly kings did not receive tribute from their own people or children, so he the Son of God was exempt from paying tribute to God.

Jesus was by this time well known in Capernaum as a great prophet. The people were enraptured by his preaching, and astonished at his miracles. The story of the restoration of the daughter of Jairus, no doubt, had spread rapidly from house to house. The death of the beloved child of the ruler of the synagogue would cause no little sensation in the city. What, then, must have been the effect upon the minds of the people when they heard that she was miraculously restored to life. This miracle was followed by many others, and we cannot wonder that the tribute gatherers hesitated about demanding tribute from the Lord Jesus. Our Saviour did not wish to give offence by appearing to despise the temple, and not to respect the authority which had originally commanded this tribute to be paid. And as he and his poor host had no money, or at least not sufficient, he said to Peter, "Go thou to the sea, and cast a hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money :* that take, and give unto them for me

* A stater, or shekel of silver, value half-a-crown.

and thee.”¹ St Matthew (the only Evangelist who mentions this miracle) says no more on the subject ; but we infer, even from his silence, that Peter did as he was commanded by our Lord.

It was not every poor Jew who had a divine Master near him to miraculously provide him with the means of paying the tribute ; and doubtless many were often unprepared to meet the demands of the collectors, although all, when they could, would cheerfully give money that was devoted to the maintenance of their beautiful and beloved temple. How different must their feelings have been when, after Jerusalem had fallen into the hands of the Romans, and its glorious temple had been destroyed, they (so Josephus the Jewish historian tells us) were compelled to pay every year into the Capitol in Rome the same sum they had annually paid to the Temple in Jerusalem.

After the miracle of the fish and the tribute money, St Matthew relates Christ’s discourse with his disciples about humility and forgiveness, and tells us that Peter asked Jesus how often he should forgive his brother. “Lord, how oft,” said the Apostle, “shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times ; but, Until seventy times seven.”² Jesus meant Peter

¹ Matt. xvii. 27.

² Matt. xviii. 21, 22.

to understand that, however often his Christian brother offended or harmed him, he was to forgive him if he repented of what he had done, and sought his forgiveness. Our Lord then illustrated what he had said by the beautiful parable of the king and his servants, which you can read in the eighteenth chapter of St Matthew's Gospel.

One day a rich young man, a ruler, came running to Jesus, and when he had reached him, he "said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?"¹ Our Saviour told him that he must keep the commandments. He inquired, Which? Jesus answered, "Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother: and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."² The young man replied, "All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?"³ "Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me."⁴ Several times before had Jesus given this invitation, and it had always been accepted. To Peter and Andrew he

¹ Matt. xix. 16.

² Matt. xix. 18, 19.

³ Matt. xix. 20.

⁴ Mark x. 21.

had said, "Follow me,"¹ and they forsook all, and followed him. Our Lord called James and John, we may suppose, with the words, "Follow me;" "and they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him."² Philip and Matthew heard the same gracious words, and needed not a second invitation. But the young rich ruler whom Jesus loved refused to obey the voice of the divine Redeemer. True, he felt sorrowful, nay more, grieved, but still he went away. He longed to follow Jesus, and to obtain eternal life, but he loved his earthly treasures more than the Saviour or his own precious soul. He went away, and never again, in all probability, saw Jesus. Upon our Saviour remarking, after the young ruler had gone, how hard it was for a rich man, or one who trusted in riches, to enter the kingdom of God, Peter asked him what reward he and his companions should have who had forsaken all and followed him. Our Lord answered, "There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."³ "Verily I say unto you, that ye which

¹ Matt. iv. 19.² Matt. iv. 22.³ Mark x. 29, 30.

have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”¹ This promise Jesus repeated to his Apostles on the night of his betrayal. The promise made by Christ to his followers or temporal blessings in such abundance, must not be taken literally, it means that more, a hundred-fold more, than houses, or brethren, or sisters, or fathers, or mothers, or wives, or children, or lands, should those who had forsaken all for his sake have in the peace of conscience, the fellowship with God, the communion with the saints, and the glorious and blissful prospect of heaven which they should enjoy. The chief promise of our Saviour to his faithful followers relates to their future state, and by-and-by, in the day of regeneration, when God shall make all things new, and when Christ shall come with his holy angels, and shall sit in the throne of his glory, the Apostles shall be seated upon thrones “judging the twelve tribes of Israel,” that is, the Jews. The Apostles will bear witness to the acceptance of the gospel, or its rejection, by the twelve tribes, and they will join in the justness of the sentence the Lord Jesus will then pronounce. Here is, doubtless, an honour spoken of to which other saints are not to be raised.

¹ Matt. xix. 28.

Our Saviour evidently alludes to the custom of princes having their great men ranged around them as assessors or assistants, when they sit in judgment or council.

In writing the life of St Peter, so far as it is recorded in the sacred narrative, I must confine myself as much as possible to the events in which he is individually mentioned. But it must not be forgotten that, in doing this, I omit many, very many, deeply interesting scenes in which he, as one of the twelve, took a part.

The time approached when Jesus would give his life a sacrifice for the sins of men. He made a solemn progress from Galilee to Jerusalem; and when his journey was near its end, he came to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives. When there he sent two of his disciples, (supposed to have been Peter and John,) "saying, Go ye into the village over against you; in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring him hither. And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose him? thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him. And they that were sent went their way, and found even as he said unto them. And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt? And they said, The Lord hath need of him. And they

brought him to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon. And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way. And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest."¹

The sight of our Saviour entering Jerusalem amidst the hosannas of the multitude, and riding upon an ass, must have confirmed, in the minds of many wavering Jews, the fact that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed the long-looked-for Messiah. The Jews always understood that Zechariah, in the passage the Evangelists quote, meant the Messiah. It was customary for the Hebrew rulers and princes to make use of asses, which in Eastern countries were much higher and more beautiful than those we are in the habit of seeing. Deborah, the prophetess of Israel, in her exquisite hymn of thanksgiving for the deliverance of Israel from Jabin and Sisera, describes the chief governors of Israel as riding on white asses. Jair "judged Israel twenty and two years, and he had thirty sons who rode on thirty ass colts."² Another judge we read of,

Luke xix. 30-38.

² Judges x. 3, 4.

Abdon, "had forty sons and thirty nephews that rode on threescore and ten ass colts."¹ But from the building of the temple after the Babylonian captivity to its destruction by Titus, no one but Jesus ever entered the gates of Jerusalem sitting upon an ass and attended by a multitude proclaiming him king. And yet the rulers of the city, with the priests and scribes, would not acknowledge the Messiah when he did come. Pride and envy made them wilfully blind; and instead of welcoming their long-looked-for king when he at length appeared, as their prophets had said he should, they only "sought how they might kill him."²

The humble village of Bethany had the honour of affording a resting-place for our Saviour during the last few nights which preceded his arrest in Gethsemane. The Mount of Olives lay between Jerusalem and Bethany, and the morning after Jesus had entered the city in triumph, saw him and his disciples passing over Olivet on their way to Jerusalem. Jesus, we read, "was hungry: and seeing a fig-tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find anything thereon; and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet. And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard it."³ On the fol-

¹ Judges xii. 14.² Luke xxii. 2.³ Mark xi. 12-14.

lowing morning, as they passed by the same spot, "they saw the fig-tree dried up from the roots. And Peter, calling to remembrance, saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig-tree which thou cursedst is withered away."¹ When you have read the words "the time of figs was not yet," you will have supposed that they mean it was not the season for figs to be on the tree, and may have wondered why Jesus was disappointed at not finding any fruit. The expression means, that it was not the time for the in-gathering of figs, and as the fig-tree forms its early fruit as soon as its leaves, and the time of gathering the fruit had not arrived, there being no fruit on the tree was an evident proof that it was barren. Whatever the season might have been, our Lord had reason to expect to find fruit ripe or unripe on the tree, as it is the nature of the fig-tree in a favourable climate to be always bearing, and while one fig is ripe another is green. But this tree had no fruit of any description upon it. Our Saviour consequently cursed it, and the tree immediately withered away. This was a parable *performed*. Jesus wished his disciples to understand the fig-tree as a significant symbol of the Jewish nation, which had then but a formal profession of religion, possessing the leaves but not the fruits of holiness, and that like the fig-tree it

¹ Mark xi. 20, 21.

should be suddenly cursed and rooted out. Peter did not live to see the fulfilment of the prophecy, but one at least of his companions did.

Three days after his public entry into Jerusalem, Jesus told Peter and John to go into the city, and they would meet a man carrying a pitcher of water. They were to follow him, and if he went into a house, they were to go in also, and say to the master of the house, "Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples?"¹ The guest-chamber was a room set apart for company. Apartments in Jerusalem were not, at the season of the Passover (when the city would be crowded with strangers from all parts) to be let, but were at the service of any who wished to partake of the feast. Peter and John did as our Lord directed them. They went into the city; met a man carrying a pitcher of water; saw him go into a house, and followed him; delivered the message of Jesus to the master, who showed them the guest-chamber furnished and prepared. There they made ready the Passover. In the evening Jesus, with his twelve Apostles, sat down to eat the Passover. What a solemn meeting! Jesus knew that before the next evening he would be in paradise; but his poor disciples would be scattered and frightened

¹ Mark xiv. 14.

as sheep having lost their shepherd. The feast of the Passover, you will remember, was a festival kept in commemoration of the departure of the Israelites out of Egypt, and took its name from the destroying angel passing over the houses of the Israelites, when the first-born of the Egyptians were slain. The feast consisted of a lamb, roasted, which was eaten with bitter herbs. These bitter herbs were dipped into a sauce called charoseth, which was composed of dates, figs, or raisins, beaten into a pulp and then mixed with vinegar and other ingredients to the consistency of thick mustard. This sauce was a memorial of the clay with which the Israelites made bricks in Egypt, and the herbs of the bitter trials they there endured. The guests at the feast of the Passover also dipped the unleavened bread in the charoseth and then ate it. It is supposed that it was in this sauce that Christ dipped the sop which he gave to Judas.

The Jews observed the following ceremonies at their solemn feasts. When the party who were to partake of the feast met they were first to salute each other either with a bow or such words as, "Peace be unto thee," or by kissing one another. St Paul calls the last mode of salutation "a holy kiss,"¹ and St Peter "a kiss of charity,"² or love.

¹ 1 Cor. xvi. 20.

² 1 Peter v. 14.

The next ceremony was washing the feet. This was only done once excepting at the feast of the Passover, when the feet were washed both before and after the feast. This office was performed by servants and the meanest of the family. Indeed, the very vessels which had been used for the purpose were considered vile. They were called wash-pots. The Psalmist wishing to show his contempt for the Moabites, said, "Moab is my wash-pot,"¹ which means that he would reduce that people to the vilest servitude. After the feet were washed, oil was poured upon them and upon the heads of the guests. When these preparatory ceremonies were over, the guests arranged themselves in a reclining posture round the table. The master of the house then took a cup of wine in his right hand and blessed it, using these words, "Blessed be thou, O Lord our God, the King of all the world, which createst the fruit of the vine." After saying this he tasted the wine, and from him it was passed round the table. The master then took a piece of bread, which was lightly cut but not through, so that it could be easily broken, and holding it in both his hands he consecrated it, using these words, "Blessed be thou, O Lord our God, the King of the world, which bringeth forth bread out of the earth." He then broke it in

¹ Ps. lx. 8.

pieces and gave to each guest a morsel. The bread and wine having been partaken of, the guests with the master of the house began to eat the paschal lamb. When they were satisfied they gave thanks in the following manner: The master took a cup of wine in both his hands and said, "Let us bless him who hath fed us with his own, and of whose goodness we live." Then all the guests answered, "Blessed be he of whose meat we have eaten, and of whose goodness we live." The master then added a long prayer, after which the guests said to themselves in a soft low voice, "Fear ye the Lord, all ye his holy ones, because there is no penury to those that fear him; the young lions do want and suffer hunger, but those who seek the Lord want no good thing."¹ The master then blessed the cup using the same words he did at the beginning of the feast, and after drinking a little of the wine passed it round the table. This is believed to have been the cup our Saviour used when instituting the holy sacrament. They then concluded by singing the great hallel or hymn of praise, the words of which you will find in the hundred and fifteenth and three following psalms.

You will, I think, after reading this account of the feast of the Passover, better understand the transactions of our Lord and his disciples at "the

¹ Ps. xxxiv. 9, 10.

last supper." We read that after Jesus had sat down with the twelve Apostles "he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer ; for I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves ; for I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you ; this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you."¹ Jesus did not, as you will have observed, when he instituted the sacrament of his most blessed body and blood, appoint a new rite, but appropriated an old one to answer a new purpose. His followers were no longer to eat the consecrated bread and drink the consecrated wine in remembrance of the deliverance of their forefathers out of Egypt, but in remembrance of their dear Master, who, by dying for them delivered them from spiritual bondage, a bondage far worse than the Egyptian one. The feast of the Passover was restricted to Jews, but all Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles, may partake of the gospel

¹ Luke xxii. 15-20.

feast. Jesus invites all his disciples to come to the holy supper. Can it be possible that any of them refuse so gracious an invitation? Alas, it is often too true that it is unheeded. In vain is the feast provided. The messengers of Christ point to the bread and wine, and remind their flocks of all the touching scenes connected with their Saviour's almost dying command, "This do in remembrance of me." They are eloquent in a cause of such vital importance to the souls of their hearers; and what is the result? Many, very many, as soon as the pleaders are silent, turn their backs upon the sacred feast, as though it were an idle tale they had been listening to.

Towards the end of the paschal supper, Jesus arose and took off his outer garment. This piece of dress was long, and would be in the way when the wearer wanted to do any work. Our Lord then poured some water into a basin, and began to wash his disciples' feet. He wished to set them an example of love and humility, telling them that they ought to wash one another's feet, or, in other words, be willing to assist each other in any way, however humble the task might be. When he came to Peter, the Apostle said in astonishment, "Lord, dost thou wash my feet?"¹ How characteristic of the impetuous Peter was this question. He loved and revered his Divine Master, and felt his own un-

¹ John xiii. 6.

worthiness too much to allow Jesus to perform such a menial office for him. But our Lord, in order to remove his scruples, said, "What I do thou knowest not now ; but thou shalt know hereafter."¹ Peter ought at once, after hearing this, to have allowed Jesus to proceed with the ceremony, as our Saviour plainly intimated that there was a hidden meaning in what he wished to do. But Peter was obstinate in his refusal, and said, "Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me."² This was an awful threat, but light at once dawned upon Peter's mind. "If I wash *thee* not," that is, unless thou art washed in my blood and renewed by my spirit, represented by my washing thy feet, "thou hast no part with me." Peter at once "saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head."³ He would rather be washed all over than not to belong to the Saviour. "Jesus saith unto him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit."⁴ In consequence of it being the custom for the people of the East in our Lord's time to go abroad barefoot or with thin sandals, the feet required to be washed much more frequently than other parts of the body. So a pardoned sinner, though par-

¹ John xiii. 7.² John xiii. 8.³ John xiii. 9,⁴ John xiii. 10.

doned completely, has still pollutions daily contracted to be daily washed away.

When Jesus had sat down again, he told his Apostles that one of them should betray him. The disciples looked at each other, wondering which of them could do such a wicked deed. They were very much grieved, and each began to say, "Lord, is it I?"¹ "Now, there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. He then, lying on Jesus' breast, saith unto him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot."² The traitor very shortly after this left the room, and then Jesus told his disciples that he would before long leave them. Peter asked him where he was going to? Our Lord said, "Whither I go thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards."³ Peter would remember these words when he was, like Jesus, fastened to the cross. But, not knowing his future fate, he said, "Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake."⁴ Jesus answered him, with a countenance

¹ Matt. xxvi. 22.

² John xiii. 36.

³ John xiii. 23-26.

⁴ John xiii. 37.

and voice more expressive of pity than severity, "Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake?"¹ As much as though our Lord had said, Ah, Peter, this is sooner said than done. Life is not so readily parted with. You trembled upon the water; and beginning to sink, you cried out, "Lord, save me."² Be not so confident now. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice."³ Peter had too much confidence in his own strength, so, notwithstanding what Jesus had said, he declared, that though he should die with him, he would not deny him. "Although all shall be offended, yet will not I,"⁴ he said. He doubted the faith and courage of others, but had no doubt about his own.

The paschal hymn having been sung by our Saviour and the eleven Apostles, they all went to the Mount of Olives, where Jesus, with many sweet words, comforted and instructed his sorrowing disciples; and after offering up a fervent prayer for them, "he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron."⁵ "And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray. And he taketh with him Peter, and James and John and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy."⁶

¹ John xiii. 38.² Matt. xiv. 30.³ John xiii. 38.⁴ Mark xiv. 29.⁵ John xviii. 1.⁶ Mark xiv. 32, 33.

And now our Saviour suffered that bitter agony which caused him to sweat "as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."¹ He was taking upon himself the sins of mankind. He knew he was going to be sacrificed, to suffer a slow and most painful death, and he prayed that if it were possible the cup of sorrow might pass from him; but at the same time added, "Not my will, but thine, be done."² Oh, whenever we think of Jesus on that dreadful night, kneeling in agony on the ground, how must we hate sin! When you are tempted to sin, rather than submit to any evil, think of Jesus in the garden—

"Go to dark Gethsemane,
Ye that feel the tempter's power."

And Jesus, who is now reigning in all his glorious majesty in heaven, will send the Holy Spirit to comfort and strengthen you.

While Jesus was passing through such dreadful sufferings, his wearied disciples had fallen asleep. Our Lord went to them and said to Peter, "Simon, sleepest thou? couldest thou not watch one hour? Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak. And again he went away, and prayed, and spake the same words. And when he returned, he found

¹ Luke xxii. 44.

² Luke xxii. 42.

them asleep again (for their eyes were heavy), neither wist they what to answer him. And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest : it is enough, the hour is come ; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up, let us go ; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand.”¹ We can easily suppose how Peter, James, and John would start to their feet. But we can scarcely imagine their surprise and horror when they saw Judas leading armed soldiers to the spot where their dear Master was standing. A servant of the high priest, named Malchus, tried to take hold of Jesus. Peter was so indignant that he struck Malchus with his sword, possibly intending to kill him, but he only cut off his ear. Our Lord reproved Peter for using his sword, and touching the ear of Malchus he healed him. The disciples fled. Peter, however, summoned resolution to return and follow Jesus and his captors, though afar off. The Saviour was taken to the palace of Caiaphas the high priest, where he was to be tried by his cruel judges. Another disciple (supposed to have been John) also followed Jesus, and went with him into the palace. Peter, we find, stood outside, and could not gain admittance until the other disciple, who was known unto the high priest, “spake unto her

¹ Mark xiv. 37-42.

that kept the door, and brought in Peter.”¹ A favour, doubtless, Peter thought it, to be allowed to enter the palace. Alas ! what misery and self-reproach he would have escaped if he had remained shivering in the cold without. “And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them. But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him. And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not. And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not. And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him : for he is a Galilean. And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out and wept bitterly.”² The glance of Jesus had pierced his heart. And well might he weep ! He, a disciple, an apostle, and a special favourite, had denied his beloved Master, his Saviour and Redeemer. Peter shed tears of true penitence. He remem-

¹ John xviii. 16.² Luke xxii. 55-62.

bered how, a few hours before, when Jesus told him he had prayed for him that his faith might not fail, he had declared that he was ready to go with his dear Lord to prison and to death, and how, when the time of trial came, he had bent as a reed in the wind. His faith was assaulted, it gave way, but it did not utterly fail. He repented, and became again the faithful and affectionate disciple he was before. With the remembrance of his fall, which lasted through his life, Peter never forgot the Saviour's injunction, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."¹ By his faithfulness, his preaching, his courage, his love, his devotion, his zeal, his firmness, his patience, his humility, and, lastly, by his cheerfully submitting to death on the cross, Peter strengthened his brethren.

After his fall and repentance we hear nothing more of Peter till the resurrection morn. The holy women who had gone to the sepulchre with spices to anoint the body of Jesus, saw an angel, who said unto them, "Go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee, there shall ye see him as he said unto you."² Why was Peter specially mentioned? That he might be comforted by the assurance that his dear Master had forgiven him and still regarded him

¹ Luke xxii. 32.

² Mark xvi. 7.

with favour as one of his chosen ones. How Peter spent the hours which intervened between his denial and his meeting with the women, we know not. But most probably he was bowed down to the earth with grief, not only on account of the condemnation and death of his beloved Master, but also on account of his own baseness. Neither do we know where he went to when he left the palace of Caiaphas, but we may suppose that the gentle and affectionate John took his humbled and penitent brother to his own home, for we find these two disciples running together to the sepulchre after Mary Magdalene had told them that the body of Jesus was gone. "And the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. And he, stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter, following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, and the napkin which was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw and believed."¹ They believed that the body had, as Mary Magdalene had told them, been taken away. They did not believe that Christ had risen, and yet they could scarcely have supposed that the

¹ John xx. 4-8.

grave-clothes of Jesus would have been left in such order had the body been stolen; fear and haste would have caused the riflers of the tomb to leave all behind them in confusion. Before that day drew to its close, Jesus appeared to Peter when he was alone, but what passed between the risen Saviour and his penitent Apostle we are not informed.

I cannot tell you exactly how long it was after the resurrection that Peter and the disciples saw Jesus by appointment in Galilee; but certainly it was more than eight days, for it was after eight days that our Lord appeared to the Apostles in a room in Jerusalem, when Thomas was with them, and this occurred before the meeting in Galilee. This meeting is generally believed to have taken place on Mount Tabor, and it is supposed that many disciples besides the Apostles saw Jesus on the mountain; indeed, it is thought by some that this was the occasion St Paul speaks of when he tells the Corinthians that Jesus "was seen of above five hundred brethren at once."¹ St Matthew says, "And when they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted."² It is conjectured that the reason why some doubted was because they were at a greater distance from Jesus than others, and could not as distinctly see him.

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 6.

² Matt. xxviii. 17.

Once again we find Peter on the sea of Galilee engaged in his old trade of fishing. Several of the Apostles were with him. All night long they toiled, and caught nothing. "But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore; but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No. And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore; and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now, when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea."¹ Peter's impatience and eagerness would not let him wait till the ship neared the shore. The expression "he was naked" means that he had only his under dress on, which was a close fitting garment. The people of the East wore over the tunic, or under garment, a loose square piece of cloth, which they girded about their waists in time of work or action. When they had not this *upper* garment on they were spoken of as being naked. David, we read, danced before the ark uncovered or naked, which

¹ John xxi. 4-7.

means he only wore his tunic when he danced, and that he had put off his royal robes.

Regardless of the wet and cold, the devoted Apostle waded through the water to Jesus, and we can imagine him with feelings of rapture, love, and reverence, prostrating himself before his Saviour on the beach. In the meantime the other disciples reached the shore in a little ship, dragging the net with fishes. When they landed they saw a fire of coal, "and fish laid thereon, and bread,"¹—no doubt miraculously provided. Jesus told them to bring the fish they had caught. The ever-ready and active Peter "went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three; and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken. Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine."² "So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs."³ Peter did not now presume to say that he loved Jesus more than the other Apostles did, but appealed to our Lord's divine knowledge of his heart. "Lord, thou *knowest* that I love thee." Blessed Peter, who feared not the all-searching

¹ John xxi. 9.² John xxi. 11-13.³ John xxi. 15.

eye of his Saviour, but could appeal to his Omniscience to confirm the truth of his sincerity. Three times did our Saviour ask him the same question, thus reminding Peter of his threefold denial of him. Each time Jesus received the same answer. No wonder Peter was grieved. But in order that he might know that he was forgiven, and that Jesus had again confidence in him, our Lord three times commanded him to feed his flock. He was to instruct and guide all of Christ's fold. To feed the lambs, by giving them the sincere milk of the word, by comforting the feeble-minded, and supporting the weak. The sheep, by leading them to the rich pastures of God's word and ordinances, and encouraging them to grow in grace and in the knowledge of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This commission had been given, in other words, to all the Apostles, and Peter only received it now from the lips of Jesus that he might know he was fully restored to his former position. Our Lord again foretold to Peter the mode of his death. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken

this, he saith unto him, Follow me.”¹ Two years before had Peter, as now, stood on the shore of Galilee, with his fishing net miraculously filled with fishes, and listening to the gracious words, “Follow me.” Where to, Lord? might the poor fisherman have asked. To where poverty, sickness, ignorance, and vice dwell; to the solitude of the barren wilderness and the lonely mountain, to prison, and to Calvary, would be the reply. “Follow me,” said the risen Saviour. How? might the Apostle have asked. By walking in the paths of active obedience, by obeying my precepts, by imitating my example. Follow me to the cross, from whence thou shalt follow me to my glorious home above, and there occupy the throne awaiting thee.

The prospect of suffering even unto death for Christ’s sake did not now, it appears, alarm the so lately cowardly Apostle, for Peter, immediately after hearing the prediction of his martyrdom, only betrayed anxiety to know what would befall his companion, John. “Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? Peter, seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that

¹ John xxi. 18, 19.

he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me."¹ Our Saviour mildly rebuked Peter's curiosity; he would have him know that what might happen to John was no concern of his, and that he would have enough to do if he attended to his own duty.

We are not told how long Jesus remained with the Apostles on the shore of Galilee. But it is evident that Peter and his companions did not pursue their trade of fishing, for we next find the eleven with our Saviour near Jerusalem. And Jesus "led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven."² "And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."³ These angels were mercifully sent to the Apostles to instruct and console them at a moment when they would naturally be keenly feeling their desolate condition. They were not only consoled, but cheered, for St Luke at the close of

¹ John xxi. 20-22. ² Luke xxiv. 50, 51. ³ Acts i. 10, 11.

his Gospel tells us that they "returned to Jerusalem with great joy."¹

The Apostles remained at Jerusalem according to the command of Jesus until the descent of the Holy Ghost upon them. They and many of the disciples met in an upper room where they "all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples,"² and addressed them on the subject of electing an Apostle in the place of the traitor Judas. A full account of this transaction you will find towards the end of this book in the life of Matthias.

When the Apostles had received the gift of the Holy Ghost and had begun to speak many languages, the people said they had been taking too much wine. Peter boldly defended himself and his friends, and spoke with such power that three thousand of his listeners became Christians. Before multitudes, Peter now gloried in being a follower of Christ.

The first miracle recorded as having been performed by the Apostles after the conversion of the three thousand was the healing of the crippled beggar. St Luke (who wrote the Acts of the Apostles) gives the following account of it:—"Now

¹ Luke xxiv. 52.

² Acts i. 14, 15.

Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour. And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up; and immediately his feet and ankle-bones received strength. And he, leaping up, stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God: and they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him. And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering."¹ No marvel that this miracle made so great a sensation. Daily for

¹ Acts iii. 1-11.

some time, perhaps for many years, had the worshippers at the temple been in the habit of seeing this poor man, and listening to his piteous tale. And now at the name of Jesus Christ his distorted limbs had become straight and his ankle-bones had received strength, and he who had from his birth, a period of forty years, been a helpless cripple, now walked. Those who have been always blessed with the use of their limbs can scarcely imagine the gratitude and joy of this poor man, when as if testing the new power just given to him he went into the temple "walking, and leaping." Often perhaps had he seen the blessed Jesus enter the temple through the Beautiful gate, and often perhaps his outstretched hand had almost touched the hem of the Saviour's garment; and though his body had not been made whole, his soul may have felt the influence of the Divine presence; and when Peter said, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk," he was prepared to acknowledge him by whose power he obeyed the command.

The address of Peter to the astonished multitude you will find in the third chapter of the Acts. Who can read it without being struck with the boldness and courage of the once timid Apostle? He spoke to a vast assembly, to many who only a few weeks before had joined in the cry, "Crucify

him, crucify him,"¹ and who hated and despised the very name of Jesus of Nazareth. These the dauntless Apostle accused of being murderers, of having killed the Prince of Life. He then told them that it was through faith in Jesus that the man whom they both saw and knew had been made strong. With irresistible arguments he exhorted them to repent. The result was that very many became Christians, and that the company of believers now numbered five thousand men. But the priests and Sadducees, though strongly opposed to each other in their religious belief, united in their opposition to the Apostles. Peter and John were seized and put into prison. On the morrow they were brought before the rulers, elders, and scribes, "and when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?"² Peter was filled with the Holy Ghost, who both strengthened and instructed him. The words of Jesus never fail. He had told his disciples that they should be brought before kings and rulers for his sake, and that he would give them a mouth and wisdom which all their adversaries should not be able to gainsay nor resist. With inspired words Peter answered his judges. He told them the simple truth, and the priests, elders, and scribes could

¹ Luke xxiii. 21.

² Acts iv. 7.

say nothing against it. They were at a loss to know what to do, so they ordered all to leave the council-chamber while they consulted together. They agreed to threaten Peter and John and then let them go. "And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people ; for all men glorified God for that which was done."¹ "And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both

¹ Acts iv. 18-21.

Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, by stretching forth thine hand to heal: and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.”¹ Oh, what a thrilling scene this must have been! Where it took place we do not exactly know, but most probably the same upper room in which the band of believers met after the ascension was still the meeting-place of the followers of the crucified One. We can imagine with what consternation the disciples heard of the arrest of Peter and John, and how they would immediately convene together, and with prayer and supplication entreat the Lord to protect his servants. Their prayers were answered. Peter and John, unfettered and free, joined them. The two Apostles soon told their story, and then the whole assembly lifted up their voices to God. We would gladly know whose voices joined in that fervent prayer. We are not told, but we may reasonably

¹ Acts iv. 23-31.

suppose, that in addition to the Apostles, most if not all the seventy disciples were of the company. Salome, the mother of John, was perhaps there, and the other devoted women who had followed Jesus from Galilee. And possibly the meek and blessed Virgin, who had trembled for the safety of her only earthly protector, now lifted up her voice in prayer and praise with the rest; and perhaps Lazarus and his sisters were there, and many whom Jesus had healed of their infirmities; and possibly some of the mothers who had taken their little ones to the Saviour to be blessed by him formed part of the company. Far above the noisy city, far above the loftiest pinnacle of the temple, their voices rose. In heaven their prayer was heard. "The place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost."

We now come to a very, very sad story. The followers of Jesus increased rapidly, and the majority of them being poor, "as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need."¹ There were among the believers a man and his wife named Ananias and Sapphira, who, though profess-

¹ Acts iv. 34, 35.

ing to be disciples, had not the grace of God in their hearts. They had landed possessions, which they sold avowedly for the same purpose as the rest, not wishing to appear behind their companions in zeal and benevolence. But they were not willing to part with all their money ; so they agreed between themselves to give the apostles only a portion of it. They were quite at liberty to do so if they chose, and as they had not faith enough to trust in the Lord providing for their future wants, they only acted with common worldly prudence. Had they brought a part of the money, and said they willingly gave so much, all might have been well : they would but have had the reputation of not being wholly disinterested. Grace might ere long have been given them, and they would then have been both ready and willing from the purest motives to lend *all* they possessed to the Lord. But covetousness and vainglory tempted them to commit a fearful sin. They took part of the money to the apostles, declaring it was all their estate had produced. One of the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost was the power of discerning spirits,—that is, of seeing the inward purposes of men's hearts. Peter at this time possessed this power, so when Ananias laid the money at the apostles' feet, "Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back

part of the price of the land ? While it remained, was it not thine own ? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power ? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart ? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. Ananias, hearing these words, fell down, and gave up the ghost ; and great fear came on all them that heard these things. And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him. And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much ? And she said, Yea, for so much. Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord ? Behold, the feet of them that have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out. Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost ; and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband. And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things." ¹

The speedy and awful display of God's vengeance upon this guilty pair was necessary to prevent the intrusion of hypocrites into the society of the believers. The desired effect was produced, for very

¹ Acts v. 3-11.

shortly after the account of this transaction we read the words, "and of the rest durst no man join himself to them."¹ Many hypocrites would doubtless have made an effort to join the disciples, from no other motive but the prospect of being maintained out of the believers' treasury. But with the terrible fate of Ananias and Sapphira before them, they dared not attempt to pollute the assembly of God's saints with their presence. Peter charged Ananias with having lied to the Holy Ghost, and directly afterwards says, "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God," thereby showing that the Holy Ghost is God. The young men, we read, wound Ananias up and buried him. These last sad duties were also performed for Sapphira. In their graveclothes the corpses were wound, and, as is the custom still in hot eastern countries, were buried almost immediately after their souls had departed.

The judgment of the Almighty upon Ananias and Sapphira was immediately followed by numerous acts of mercy, as though to invite people to love Christianity, and so join the believers without fear. Many wonders were wrought by the Apostles, insomuch that the people "brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by

¹ Acts v. 13.

might overshadow some of them.”¹ It is not said that his shadow *cured* the sick, neither are we told that it did not. But if God did make use of the shadow to display his power and goodness, there was nothing to marvel at, more than at the fact that the handkerchiefs and aprons which had touched St Paul’s body were used as instruments to cure diseases and cast out devils. Multitudes became believers. Then the high priest, an ungodly man, if not a Sadducee, rose, and they that were with him, and, seizing upon the Apostles, “put them in the common prison. But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth.”² The next morning the Apostles were found in the temple teaching the people. The high priest had them again seized, and they were brought before the Sanhedrim or chief council of the Jews. Peter and his companions boldly replied to the charge made against them, which so enraged their judges that the Apostles would have been put to death; but, by the advice of one of the council, (Gamaliel,) they were only beaten, and commanded not to speak in the name of Jesus, and then set at liberty. “And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the

¹ Acts v. 15.² Acts v. 18, 19.

temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.”¹

The Church now began to be much persecuted. The blood of the first martyr, Stephen, had been shed ; and Saul of Tarsus was imprisoning all he could lay hands upon who would not deny that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah. The believers were obliged to leave Jerusalem : they “were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria, except the Apostles.”² . “Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.”³ God brought good out of evil, for as the disciples were dispersed, so was the Gospel. Among those who went to Samaria was Philip—not the Apostle of that name, for he was with the other Apostles at Jerusalem, but Philip the deacon. About that time there was in Samaria a very wicked man called Simon, better known as Simon Magus or Simon the sorcerer, who so bewitched the people with his diabolical arts that they believed him to be a deity. But when Philip appeared among them and preached Jesus, and the Samaritans saw that unclean spirits obeyed his voice, and that those who were afflicted with diseases were healed by him, they believed what he taught “concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ ; they were baptized, both

¹ Acts v. 41, 42.

² Acts viii. 1.

³ Acts viii. 4.

men and women.”¹ Simon Magus could not help believing like the rest, and he was likewise baptized.

“When the Apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the Apostles’ hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.”² Simon’s greedy eyes at once saw the rich harvest in store for him, if he could only by laying on his hands endow men with miraculous powers. What would not even the nobles and princes of the land offer him for his services, besides the honour that would accrue to himself! Yes, avarice and pride would be abundantly gratified if Peter would sell him the gift of God. But Peter, with the greatest indignation, refused him his request. He felt the most thorough contempt for such a character, and, with his usual zeal, said, “Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of

¹ Acts viii. 12.

² Acts viii. 14-19.

God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter : for thy heart is not right in the sight of God.”¹ Peter then exhorted Simon to repent, who besought the Apostle to pray for him, not that he (Simon) might repent, but that the judgment denounced upon him might be averted. There is no further notice of Simon Magus in the sacred writings, but ecclesiastical history speaks of him as the father of all heresy. To the end of his days, he remained in the bonds of iniquity. He was by birth a Samaritan, and, travelling into Egypt, there studied oriental philosophy. He returned to Samaria, eminently skilled in medicine, astrology, and other abstruse sciences. He made use of his knowledge to impose upon his countrymen. He was the bitterest enemy to the Church. He allowed that Jesus was a divine person, but not equal to himself. “I am,” he says, in one of his books, “the word of God ; I am the beauty of God ; I am the Comforter ; I am the Almighty ; I am the whole essence of God.” He taught the people not to trouble about doing what are called good works, and pretended that men could not be saved unless they offered to God abominable sacrifices. He is spoken of as the first of the false Christs our Saviour prophesied should rise up.

¹ Acts viii. 20, 21.

Peter and John preached the gospel in Samaria, and then returned to Jerusalem. But, before following them there, I am tempted to linger with Philip, and dwell upon one of the most interesting scenes St Luke has recorded in his Acts of the Apostles: "The angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went."¹

"'Twas silent all and dead,
Beside the barren sea,
Where Philip's steps were led,
Led by a voice from thee—
He rose and went, nor ask'd thee why,
Nor stay'd to heave one faithless sigh."

"And, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning, and sitting in his chariot, read Esaias the prophet."² Ethiopia, now Abyssinia and Nubia, was one of the great kingdoms of Africa, governed at the time of which we are reading by a queen. For long the queens of Ethiopia had been called Candace, as the kings of Egypt were called Pharaoh, and the emperors of Rome, Cæsar. Now, the treasurer of Candace had been converted to

¹ Acts viii. 26, 27.

² Acts viii. 27, 28.

the Jewish faith, probably by Jews from Alexandria. This pious nobleman allowed neither the cares of his high office, nor the attractions of the court, nor the long and tedious journey of many hundred miles, to prevent him going up to Jerusalem to worship in its holy temple. Most probably, when there, he heard of the crucifixion of our Saviour, and of the supernatural occurrences which took place at his death. And he might have listened to the preaching, and have witnessed some of the miracles of the followers of him whom the priests, the scribes, and the elders had crucified. We can imagine this Ethiopian lord, in his chariot, entering Jerusalem, full of pious rapture at the sight of the glorious temple, and we can imagine him leaving the city on his return home, full of earnest thought about all he had heard and seen. The greatest treasure he possessed, the holy Scriptures, he had with him in his chariot. And as he rode, he "read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias."¹ The Ethiopian had approached the deserted Gaza, the forsaken city. Perhaps, as he was journeying from Africa to Jerusalem, he had, when passing the same spot, ordered his charioteer to stop, while he, with the sacred

¹ Acts viii. 28-30.

roll in his hand, climbed the mountain on which Gaza stood, and rambled among the desolate ruins so full of scriptural associations. But now, other thoughts filled his mind than those connected with the once mighty city. He was pondering over the words, "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth; in his humiliation his judgment was taken away; and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth."¹ God's ever watchful eye was upon the Ethiopian. He saw the longing of his heart to know the truth, and satisfied it. Philip, under divine guidance, overtook the chariot, and, hearing the eunuch reading, said to him, "Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him."² The Ethiopian then asked the Evangelist of whom the prophet spoke in the passage quoted above, "of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? Then Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he

¹ Acts viii. 32, 33.² Acts viii. 30, 31.

answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still : and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch ; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more : and he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus.”¹ The sudden and miraculous disappearance of Philip would naturally confirm the faith of the new convert, as it would show him that a messenger had indeed been sent by God to instruct and baptize him. Rejoicing, he returned to Candace’s court, carrying with him that pearl of great price, with which all the treasures entrusted to his care were not worthy to be compared. He is not again mentioned in holy writ, but ecclesiastical history tells us that in his own country he preached Jesus, and suffered death for the cause he had espoused, and that the Church he established in Ethiopia flourished for several ages.

. With regard to Philip, after his miraculous removal from the Ethiopian to Azotus, we read that “he preached in all the cities, till he came to Cæsarea.”² There, in all probability, he resided for the remainder of his life. Certain it is that he was living at Cæsarea with his four inspired

¹ Acts viii. 34-40.

² Acts viii. 40.

daughters twenty-six years after he had baptized the Ethiopian.

To return to Peter. After he and John had preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans they went back to Jerusalem. Hitherto the number of the Apostles had been limited to twelve, but about this time another was added to their company. Saul of Tarsus was miraculously converted, and chosen by the Lord to be one of his Apostles. "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judæa, and Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied."¹ One great reason why the believers were suffered by their persecutors to have a little peace, was that political troubles at that time wholly occupied the mind of the Jewish nation, so that the followers of Christ could meet together without molestation. During the calm Peter travelled about visiting the brethren, first in one place, and then in another. "He came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lydda. And there he found a certain man named Æneas, which had kept his bed eight years, and was sick of the palsy. And Peter said unto him, Æneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole: arise, and make thy bed. And he arose immediately."² Are we to suppose

¹ Acts ix. 31.

² Acts ix. 32-34.

that Æneas had never for the period of eight years quitted his bed of suffering? It is very possible that it was even so. Cases have occurred under our own notice in which invalids have lingered for years in a hopeless state of sickness, and have been scarcely able to endure the very slightest movement, much less the removal from one couch to another. This might have been the sad condition of poor Æneas when Peter found him. No longer, however, was he to be a burden to his friends—"Jesus Christ maketh thee whole," said the Apostle to him, and then commanded him to arise and make his bed. The palsied limbs which had so long lain useless became at once supple and full of vigour. Æneas must make his bed to prove how complete was his cure, "and all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron (Sharon) saw him, and turned to the Lord."¹ Not in their own names did the Apostles work miracles, but in the name of Jesus Christ. Our Saviour's divinity is shown by the manner in which he performed miracles. He was the Lord of nature, and when nature heard his voice she obeyed him. "Peace, be still," he said to the raging elements, "and the wind ceased, and there was a great calm."² "Be thou clean," he said to the leper, "and immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed."³

¹ Acts ix. 35.² Mark iv. 39.³ Mark i. 42.

"Young man, I say unto thee, arise," he said to the dead son of the widow of Nain, "and he that was dead sat up and began to speak."¹ "Come forth," he said to the putrefying corpse of Lazarus, "and he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes."² How different generally was the language of the Apostles. "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk,"³ said Peter to the cripple who lay at the beautiful gate of the temple. "Jesus Christ maketh thee whole,"⁴ Peter said to the bed-ridden Æneas. "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight,"⁵ said Ananias to the blind and humbled convert in Damascus.

About ten miles from Lydda was a town called Joppa. Here there lived a disciple, a woman rich in good works and noted for her charity. Her name was Tabitha, which in Syriac means a gazelle, an animal remarkable for its beautiful eyes; indeed, the gazelle or antelope was regarded as the emblem of beauty. Tabitha was by the Greeks called Dorcas, the latter name being the Greek for a gazelle. Whether or not Tabitha or Dorcas was so named on account of the beauty

¹ Luke vii. 15.² John xi. 44.³ Acts iii. 6.⁴ Acts ix. 34.⁵ Acts ix. 17.

and grace of her person I cannot say, but we all know that her life was beautiful. While Peter was at Lydda this charitable woman, whose chief employment appears to have been to help the destitute, sickened and died. With loving hands the corpse was prepared for its burial, and laid in an upper chamber, "and forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them. Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them."¹ The clothes which the mourners showed to the Apostle had doubtless been made by Dorcas for charitable purposes. "But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and, turning him to the body, said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up. And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive."² On the bosom of her Saviour Tabitha had rested from her labours; therefore it was more for the good of others than for her own, that she was roused from that peaceful sleep. How

¹ Acts ix. 38, 39.² Acts ix. 40, 41.

would the lamentations cease, and the widows' hearts rejoice, when Tabitha, restored to life and health, saluted her weeping friends as they re-entered the chamber. The effect of this miracle was that many believed in the Lord. In almost every town of our highly-favoured land, there may be found a band of charitable women who devote much of their time to making clothes for the poor. These associations are called "Dorcas societies," in memory of her who set them such a bright example in the same good work, and who was deemed, by the Holy Spirit, worthy of a place among the holy women of the Bible.

Peter stayed some time in Joppa, and lodged with one Simon a tanner. So far the gospel had been preached to Jews only; no others had been taught or invited to become disciples of Christ. But the time had now arrived when he, who had appeared that he might be "the glory of his people Israel," should also be "a light to lighten the Gentiles."¹ It was unlawful for a Jew to have anything to do in matters of religion with a Gentile or unclean person. The Jewish prejudices were, however, to give way under the religion of that-gospel, which was for Gentile as well as for Jew. The first Gentile convert was Cornelius, a centurion of the Roman army. He lived at

¹ Luke ii. 32.

Cæsarea, and was a "devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway. He saw in a vision, evidently about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord ? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter : he lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea-side : he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do. And when the angel which spake unto Cornelius was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually ; and when he had declared all these things unto them, he sent them to Joppa."¹ Cornelius, who is supposed to have been a member of the great Roman family of the Cornelii, was one of a class of persons called "proselytes of the gate." He was a convert from heathenism who had adopted the Hebrew belief, but did not conform to the Mosaic law. He was not circumcised ; therefore, though a worshipper of the true God, he was, in the eye of the Jew, a Gentile. The Ethiopian eunuch was one of those who are called "pro-

¹ Acts x. 2-8.

selytes of righteousness." He had not only embraced the Jewish faith, but had adopted its ceremonies. Now, although Cornelius did not observe the ceremonies of the Jews, he evidently conformed to some of their customs. He observed their hours of prayer, for we read that "he prayed to God alway," which means at the stated Jewish hours of prayer. By the word hour, as used in the Bible, you must not understand what we call an hour, that is sixty minutes. By an hour was meant any allotted portion of time. The Jews divided the day into greater and lesser hours. Of the former there were four, namely, the third hour, which was from six o'clock in the morning till nine; the sixth hour, which was from nine till twelve; the ninth hour, which was from twelve till three in the afternoon; the twelfth hour, which was from three till six in the evening. You will have observed these divisions of the day in our Lord's parable of the labourers in the vineyard, as recorded in the twentieth chapter of St Matthew. In that parable our Saviour called the last hour the eleventh, to teach us that though God in his mercy accepts labourers into his vineyard eleven hours of the day, yet he seldom calls any at the twelfth, as that is the hour in which rather to discharge servants than to admit new ones. The lesser hours were twelve in number, and these were regulated

by the time of the rising and setting of the sun. In summer the hours would be longer than in the winter. The night was divided into four greater hours or watches. The first watch was from six till nine o'clock at night. The second watch was from nine till twelve. The third watch, or cock-crowing, was from twelve till three in the morning, and the fourth or morning watch was from three till six. "Arise," said Jeremiah, "cry out in the night, in the beginning of the watches."¹ "If he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch,"² said our Saviour. "And about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea."³ These passages will suffice to confirm what I have said. Our Lord alludes to all four watches in the following verse: "Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning."⁴

Cornelius sent three messengers (who were doubtless worshippers of the true God) to Peter. Their route lay through the lovely vale of Sharon, which extended from Cæsarea to Joppa, a distance of about thirty miles. In this valley blossomed the beautiful rose, and the lily of which Israel's king had sung. The messengers did not reach

¹ Lam. ii. 19

² Mark vi. 48.

³ Luke xii. 38.

⁴ Mark xiii. 35.

their destination till near noon the next day. They must have rested for the night in one of the many villages which studded the valley. Perhaps they might from time to time have stayed to listen to the account of the miracles wrought by him to whom their master's message was sent. Each stranger they met would be able to tell them something about Jesus, whose gospel the Apostle was preaching in Joppa. And ere they neared the city, possibly the truth had dawned upon their minds, that he who had died upon the cross in Jerusalem, and in whom all Sharon and Lydda believed, was indeed *their* Saviour.

Peter, you have read, lodged, while staying at Joppa, with a tanner, a man who prepared the skins of animals for domestic use. The trade of tanning was held in great abhorrence by the Jews, because those who followed it had so constantly to come in contact with dead bodies, which rendered them ceremonially unclean. So infamous was the occupation considered by the Jews, that if a tanner did not announce his calling before his marriage the contract was void. Simon, the tanner of Joppa, was compelled to live at the sea-side, not only because his business required a great quantity of water, but because the law forbade him carrying on his trade within the walls of the city. It was on the flat roof of the despised tanner's dwelling that

Peter was praying when the messengers of Cornelius were drawing nigh to Joppa. As the Apostle prayed he "became very hungry, and would have eaten : but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, and saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth : wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter ; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord ; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done thrice : and the vessel was received up again into heaven."¹ There were in the vessel pigs, hares, camels, swans, owls, vultures, storks, and many other creatures which were called unclean, and there might have been many animals called clean, which the Jews as a rule were permitted to eat, for the holy story tells us that the vessel contained "all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air." But Peter would consider it unlawful to touch even them, because they would have become unclean by their contact with unclean

¹ Acts x. 10-16.

animals. "Now, while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made enquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate, and called and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there. While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. Arise, therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them."¹ Peter went down to the messengers, who told him their errand, and from whence they had come. Then Peter, with some of the brethren, at once set off for Cæsarea, and reached there the following day. In the meantime the centurion had called together his kinsmen and friends, and was anxiously waiting for the arrival of the Apostle. "And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man. And as he talked with him, he went in, and found many that were come together. And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come into one of another nation: but God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. Therefore came I unto

¹ Acts x. 17-20.

thee without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?"¹ Cornelius told Peter his vision. "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."² The Apostle at once preached Jesus to the devout centurion and all his household. And as he was declaring unto them the way of salvation the Holy Ghost fell upon them, and they began to speak with other tongues. The brethren who had accompanied Peter from Joppa were greatly astonished to find that the gift of the Holy Ghost was bestowed upon uncircumcised Gentiles. Then Peter said, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord."³ Thus did Peter exercise the power of the keys,* given to him by the Lord Jesus, and opened the door of Christ's kingdom to the Gentiles. The believers from Joppa could afterwards bear witness

¹ Acts x. 25-29.

² Acts x. 34, 35.

³ Acts x. 47, 48.

* It is in consequence of our Lord having said to Peter, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven," (Matt. xvi. 19), that that Apostle is generally represented in pictures carrying keys.

to what had passed in the house of Cornelius, and were useful as witnesses when Peter had to defend himself to the Apostles and brethren in Judæa for having eaten with uncircumcised men. After Peter had visited the newly-planted churches he went back to Jerusalem.

“Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the Church. And he killed James, the brother of John, with the sword. And because it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people. Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him. And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison. And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison; and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands. And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals: and so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. And he went

out, and followed him ; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel ; but thought he saw a vision. When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city ; which opened to them of his own accord : and they went out, and passed on through one street, and forthwith the angel departed from him.”¹

“ Then all himself, all joy and calm,
Though for a while his hand forego,
Just as it touch’d, the martyr’s palm,
He turns him to his task below.”

He went first “ to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying. And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda. And when she knew Peter’s voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate. And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It is his angel.”²

Herod, it seems, was determined to secure his intended victim. Peter was not only imprisoned, but was fastened by two chains to two soldiers, while two more soldiers guarded the door of his prison. Four fresh soldiers were provided for each

¹ Acts xii. 4-10.

² Acts xii. 12-15.

watch, but all in vain. In the night, while Peter was sleeping, the angel of the Lord entered the prison, awoke the captive, and raised him up. The chains fell off from Peter's hands, and he was soon prepared to follow the heavenly messenger. After passing the first and the second ward they came to the iron outer gate of the prison, which opened of its own accord and let them pass into the city. When the angel had conducted Peter safely through one street he left him. The liberated Apostle at once went to his friends. In the prison, Peter, under sentence of death, slept peacefully, but his anxious friends rested not. They met in the house of Mary, the mother of Mark the Evangelist, and there night and day prayed for the captive Apostle. We are not told who were Mary's guests, but they were truly a party of mourners, and many of them were perhaps already marked by their enemies for slaughter. No small praise is due to the mother of Mark for opening her doors at such a time to the persecuted flock, and sheltering them from the bloodhounds of the tyrant. No idle threat they knew was Herod's. The head of the dauntless and zealous James had fallen beneath the stroke of the executioner, and Peter's hours they believed were numbered, if even then he had not met with a cruel death. We can imagine how many of the devoted band would start and turn pale, when, in

the solemn stillness of the night, a knocking was heard at the gate. How would each with anxious eye gaze upon the maiden Rhoda when she appeared to announce who was standing without! "Peter!" each would exclaim. "It cannot be Peter." And when Rhoda assured them that it was indeed Peter, they, believing that death alone had set the captive free, said, "It must be his angel." It was an ancient opinion that every good man had a guardian angel appointed him by God, to take special care of him till his life's end; to direct him in his way, to guard him from danger, and to deliver him in distress. We know from the Holy Scriptures that these heavenly beings have an interest in the welfare of men, for St Paul asks, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"¹ A superstitious notion also prevailed among both Jews and Gentiles, that on the death of a person his guardian angel often appeared to his friends in the form of the deceased. Not long did the friends of Peter remain in doubt. "Peter continued knocking: and when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished. But he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison."² Peter knew that as soon as Herod

¹ Heb. i. 14.² Acts xii. 16, 17.

had discovered he had escaped, he would search for him in every direction, so, for his own safety, as well as for that of his friends, whose lives would be endangered if they harboured him, he went away. The unfortunate soldiers who had the charge of Peter in prison were by Herod's command put to death for allowing their prisoner to escape.

We hear nothing of Peter for several years. We then find him taking a leading part in the council of the Apostles, which was convened for the purpose of discussing matters connected with the ceremonial law. A full account of this important meeting you will find in the life of James the Less. Nothing more can be gathered of the history of Peter from the pen of St Luke, but in the second chapter of St Paul's Epistle to the Galatians we find that Peter was with St Paul at Antioch, and there met with severe censure from the great Apostle of the Gentiles. After Peter's vision of the vessel from heaven filled with unclean beasts, he, knowing that the partition wall between Jew and Gentile was broken down, ate and drank familiarly with the Gentile converts wherever he met them. This he did at Antioch until some Jewish brethren, sent by James the Less, Bishop of Jerusalem, arrived at the Syrian capital. Peter, fearful of offending the new comers, separated himself from the Gentile converts as though it

were unlawful to hold communion with them. This strange conduct produced many evils, and undid much that had been done. The Jewish zealots were confirmed in their error, the Gentiles were filled with fear and dissatisfaction, and the old feuds and prejudices between Jew and Gentile were revived. All the Jewish converts in Antioch followed Peter's example in their conduct towards the Gentile brethren, and even Barnabas was led away to act in the same manner. Peter was indeed much to blame, and Paul, as he tells the Galatians, "withstood him to the face."¹ The word "withstood" in the original Greek is a military term signifying to stand against, either by force of arms as among soldiers, or by dint of argument as among disputants. It is a word of defiance, and signifies an opposition, hand to hand and face to face, not yielding a hair's-breadth to the adversary. No answer, it would appear, did the humbled and doubtless penitent Apostle return. In love was the rebuke given, and in love was it received. A few years afterwards, very shortly before his crucifixion, Peter in his second epistle, when mentioning Paul, speaks of him as "our beloved brother Paul."² We therefore are assured that no ill feeling was borne by Peter towards his candid, courageous, and resolute reprov-er.

¹ Gal. ii. 11.

² 2 Peter iii. 15.

It is not known with certainty where Peter laboured after he left Antioch, but as he addressed his first epistle "to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,"¹ it is supposed that he had journeyed into those countries. He wrote from Babylon. This is generally understood to mean Rome, the ancient Assyrian capital of that name being then deserted by men, and a habitation only for wild beasts. Peter and John (the latter in the Book of Revelation) gave to Rome the name of Babylon, figuratively to signify that it would resemble Babylon in its idolatry, and in its opposition to, and persecution of, the Church of God; and that, like Babylon, it will be utterly destroyed.

From St Paul's words, "Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other Apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?"² it is believed that Peter's wife accompanied him in his missionary journeys. Clemens Alexandrinus, who lived in the second century, tells us that Peter's wife suffered martyrdom, and that her husband, seeing her on the way to execution, rejoiced that she was counted worthy of so great an honour, and calling her by name he encouraged her, and "bade her to be mindful of our Lord. Such," continues Clemens, "was the

¹ 1 Peter i. 1.

² 1 Cor. ix. 5

wedlock of that blessed couple, and the perfect disposition and agreement in those things that were dearest to them." Clemens also says that Peter had children; the name, however, of only one, Petronilla, is mentioned by early writers.

Peter's two divine epistles are supposed to have been written, the first in the year 64, and the second in the early part of the year 65. In the first he encourages the Christian converts to bear with fortitude all the trials they would have to undergo, and excites them to the practice of particular duties, and to beautify and adorn their holy profession by a holy and becoming conversation. In the second epistle he confirms the doctrines and instructions he delivered in the first, and cautions the Christians against false teachers, whose tenets and practices he largely describes, and he warns the believers to disregard those profane scoffers who made or should make a mock of Christ's coming to judgment. Both of the epistles evidently show their divine origin.

The time arrived, when Peter was to follow Jesus. Calmly, as though he were only about to take off his raiment for the night, he speaks of his approaching death, "Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me."¹ Not in the sacred

¹ 2 Peter i. 14.

story must we look for any particulars of the death of Peter beyond those foretold by our Saviour. It has been generally believed, from the works of Tertullian, Origen, and other early Christian writers, that Peter suffered martyrdom at Rome about the year 65.

It was in the persecution against the followers of Jesus raised by that monster of iniquity, Nero, that Peter was put to death. One cannot read without shuddering of the cruelties inflicted by the tyrannical emperor upon the Christians. But can we wonder that he had no mercy upon those who openly condemned his religion, when he had no pity for those of his own creed, or even for his own flesh and blood. He put to death his mother and his brother-in-law, and murdered his beautiful wife Octavia when she was only twenty years of age. His second wife fared no better, for she fell a victim to his brutal violence. Indeed, the wretched young man, who was but thirty years old when he committed suicide, seemed only to delight in cruelty and every vice. The holy Apostle was crucified, and, it is said, according to his own request, with his head downwards, as he did not consider himself worthy to suffer in the same posture in which his Lord had suffered before him. From our Saviour's predictions we must conclude that Peter submitted to all the degrading and

horrible practices inflicted upon criminals who were doomed to the most ignominious and cruel death, that of the cross. It was the custom at Rome to put the necks of those who were to be crucified into a yoke, and to stretch out their hands and fasten them to the ends of it, and having thus led them through the city, they were carried out to be crucified. For thirty years or more had the Apostle been looking forward to this last short journey. How would he, when taking it, recall the words of Jesus, "When thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not."¹ Nature would shrink from the contemplation of the torture of the cross, but the devoted martyr would likewise recall other words of the Saviour, encouraging him to faithfulness even unto death, and would possess the assurance that the crown of life would soon be his. Arrived at the place of execution, he (filled with love and veneration for him who had by his own death opened to him the gates of paradise, and fearing not the pain his enemies might inflict upon him) prayed in his deep humiliation that he might suffer in a still more agonising posture than that in which his executioners would have placed him. His last request was granted. So died this great and good

¹ John xxi. 18.

Apostle. His body was buried in Rome, and we are told that over the spot was built a small church. This has long since disappeared, and in its place stands the magnificent Romish cathedral, which has, for beauty, become one of the wonders of the world. Would that the simple truth, as it is in Jesus, and as taught by St Peter, were preached within its walls !

SAINT ANDREW.

COLLECT FOR SAINT ANDREW'S DAY.

ALMIGHTY GOD, who didst give such grace unto thy holy Apostle, Saint Andrew, that he readily obeyed the calling of thy Son, Jesus Christ, and followed him without delay : Grant unto us all, that we, being called by thy holy Word, may forthwith give up ourselves obediently to fulfil thy holy commandments ; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.



HAVE related the principal events in the life of St Peter. I will now give you a short account of his brother, Andrew. This Apostle was, before our Saviour began his ministry, a disciple of John the Baptist. He was, as you are aware, the son of poor parents, who were unable to give their children the advantages of education. Andrew was a fisherman, and found leisure to go into the wilderness to hear John preach. He became not merely a listener to, but a companion of, and an attendant upon, the Baptist. How may many of us blush when we think of these fishermen!

Surely their calling was not an easy one : a life of hardship is that of a fisherman—often, night and day, must he labour for his bread : and we know that the poor men on the Sea of Galilee occasionally toiled all night long, and caught nothing. Yet, some of them thought not of fatigue nor of danger, but travelled many a weary mile to hear the preacher in the wilderness. Do all professing Christians follow their example, as regards their interest in the Word of Life? Alas! no. Though God's messengers are proclaiming the gospel almost at their very doors, business, pleasure, or indolence make them too often refuse to listen.

How long Andrew had been a disciple of the Baptist before he saw Christ, I cannot say. We are simply told that "John stood, and two of his disciples,"¹ one of whom was Andrew. We can picture to ourselves the Baptist, clothed in sackcloth, or, as the Bible expresses it, having "his raiment of camel's hair,"² and his two companions, in the mean attire of poor fishermen, waiting for him whom prophets and kings had long desired to see. The precise spot where they stood is not known. It might have been where Joshua, the type of Jesus, more than fourteen hundred years before, had led the Israelites over the Jordan into the promised land; and perhaps many of those

¹ John i. 35.

² Matt. iii. 4.

The Apostles of Jesus.

was had been listening to John that day. When they returned home, to walk over the very spot where the ark of the covenant rested when the Israelites marched to the gates of Jericho. They might have been within sight of the Sea of Galilee, where John had baptized near Bethabara, and all the region round about Jordan, and possibly his disciples were contemplating the place so soon to be hallowed by the presence of Jesus, who was rendered famous by the mighty works, of which the evening approached. The tops of the mountains were tinged with the glow of the setting sun. Can we not imagine a scene of so much beauty and interest, as Jesus and his disciples stood and waited for the appearance of the Holy One? Jesus drew near, and passed them. John said, "Behold the Lamb of God."—the Lamb so soon to be sacrificed as an acceptable offering for the sins of mankind. Sooner was the attention of Andrew and the other disciple (supposed to be St John) called to him, that they left their master and followed Jesus. They turned round and spoke to them, asking whom they sought. They said unto him, "where dwellest thou?" He said unto them, "Follow me." They came and saw where

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life. It was Andrew's boat, as well as Peter's, which was honoured by being made the pulpit of the Saviour, when he preached to the people who were on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. And Andrew received, with Peter, the promise, that if he forsook all, and followed Jesus, he should become a fisher of men. Soon after this he was chosen as one of the Apostles.

Only a few times is Andrew mentioned individually in the Holy Scriptures; and yet, as one of the Apostles, a full account of him would occupy a volume. Was he not on the Sea of Galilee when there arose a great tempest, while Jesus, who was also in the ship, was asleep? And did not Andrew, with the other disciples, awake him, exclaiming, "Lord save us, we perish"?¹ You know they did not appeal for help in vain. Did not Andrew, at the command of Jesus, go forth to preach the gospel and heal the sick? And cannot we imagine his sorrow-stricken countenance, when he and the other Apostles returned to Jesus, after the cruel execution of his former master? Was he not present at the raising of Lazarus; and did he not shortly afterwards stand, though "afar off,"² watching, in bitter grief, the crucifixion of him for whose sake, a few years later, he cheerfully endured the most cruel tortures? But, indeed, I

¹ Matt. viii. 25.

² Luke xxiii. 49.

have not space in this book to remind you of one-half that Andrew did and saw. He is especially mentioned in the account of the miracle of the loaves and fishes, as telling Jesus what provision there was for the multitude who had followed them into the wilderness to hear the Saviour preach, and to be cured of their infirmities by him. Afterwards, Andrew, with Philip, told Jesus that some Greeks desired to see him. The disciples seem to have hesitated about the propriety of taking these Greeks or foreigners to Jesus, for though they were not idolatrous Gentiles, (or they would not have gone up to worship at the feast,) yet they were most likely what were called proselytes of the gate. Our Lord had forbidden his Apostles to go into the coasts of the Gentiles. On this account, probably, Philip and Andrew consulted Jesus before ushering the Greeks into his presence. Jesus said to them, "The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified;"¹ or, in other words, he would soon be manifested both to Jews and Gentiles.

When Jesus foretold the destruction of the temple, Andrew, with Peter, James, and John, asked him privately, "Tell us, when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?"² Jesus replied

¹ John xii. 23.

² Mark xiii. 4.

that nation should rise against nation, that there should be earthquakes, famines, pestilences, and fearful sights and great signs. Did the four Apostles who questioned Jesus witness the fulfilment of these predictions? Not all. Andrew had sealed his faith with his blood, it is supposed, before the heaviest judgments of God descended upon the wretched Jews. Peter was crucified, as you know, by Nero. This wicked emperor committed suicide before Titus Vespasian entered Judæa with his army. James survived our Saviour only fourteen years; but John not only lived till the destruction of the temple, but thirty years afterwards. He was probably, at the time when Jerusalem was besieged, residing at Ephesus. Deeply would he mourn over the fearful sufferings of his fellow-countrymen, although he knew they had, by their rejection and crucifixion of Christ, brought all the calamities upon themselves. Can we not imagine one terror-stricken Christian after another arriving at Ephesus, each bringing accounts more harrowing than the last. News travelled comparatively slowly in those days, but too soon would the Apostle hear that the Romans were at the gates of Jerusalem, and that the inhabitants were suffering from sedition, famine, and pestilence; that the Jews, who escaped out of the city, were caught by their enemies, and were

crucified outside the walls in such multitudes that wood enough could not be found for crosses; (fearful retribution for having crucified the Lord of glory!) that mothers, according to the prediction of Moses* many hundred years before, were rendered so desperate by famine that they devoured their own children; that in one night two thousand Jewish deserters were cut open by the Syrians, who suspected that they had swallowed gold as a means of conveying it away; and that six hundred thousand had perished by famine and sickness. Then would come the fearful news of the burning of the temple, and that all who had taken refuge in it fell victims to the flames, or were slaughtered by their enemies; and, lastly, St John would hear that Jerusalem had fallen, and the Romans were in full possession, slaying all they met, and burning the houses, and that the streets ran so with gore that the fires of the burning buildings were, in many places, quenched with men's blood. But the heart sickens at the mere recital of such horrors. Surely it was "tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world."¹

To return to Andrew. After the ascension of our blessed Lord, which Andrew with the rest of

¹ Matt. xxiv. 21.

* Deut. xxviii. 56, 57.

the Apostles witnessed, his name only occurs once more in the holy writings, when he is simply mentioned as being in the upper room in Jerusalem, where he and others assembled for prayer and supplication. After this we only know what happened to him as one of the twelve ; and from the period when the Apostles dispersed we know absolutely nothing of him that is of divine authority. The commission the Apostles received from their great Master was to go into all the world and preach the gospel. It was generally believed by the early Church that the Apostles agreed between themselves, under the special guidance and direction of the Holy Ghost, which parts of the world each should take. Andrew, it is said, preached to the inhabitants of Sebastopol ; and Nicephorus, patriarch of Constantinople, tells us he founded a church in that city, then called Byzantium. An early writer says, it was at a place called Patræ, a city of Greece, that his labours ended. A great man, named Ægeas, came to Patræ, where St Andrew was teaching the people. Ægeas, who was the proconsul of Achaia, was an idolater, and he was enraged to find that multitudes had been converted from heathenism to Christianity. He told Andrew that if he would not sacrifice to the gods, he should suffer death upon the cross. Andrew refused, and was put into prison. The

people were so indignant that they would have released him, but the Apostle begged them not to prevent him obtaining the crown of martyrdom. The next day Ægeas condemned him to death. Andrew, it would appear, had cured the wife and brother of Ægeas of dreadful diseases, and had been the instrument, in God's hands, of converting them to the faith of Christ. This made Ægeas more angry with Andrew, and he ordered him to be scourged by seven men, who, in turns, whipped his naked body. This torture he bore without a murmur. The proconsul then commanded that he should be tied to a cross—not nailed—that his death might be more lingering and tedious. The cross on which he suffered was in the form of the letter X. A cross in this form is called "St Andrew's cross." The martyr was composed and cheerful. When he saw the cross in the distance, as he was being led to execution, he exclaimed, "O cross, most welcome and long-looked for; with a willing mind, joyfully and desirously I come to thee, being the scholar of him who did hang on thee: because I have been always thy lover, and have coveted to embrace thee."* The people were so struck with his fortitude that they cried out he was an innocent and good man, and unjustly condemned to die. He

* *Vide* Foxe's "Acts and Monuments."

hung on the cross two days, instructing the people all the time, and then fell asleep in Jesus. His body was taken from the cross and embalmed, and was then buried with honour by, or at the expense of, a lady named Maximilla. When a corpse was embalmed, it was filled with spices and perfumes, called aromatics, which prevented it from going to decay, and caused the most fragrant exhalation to issue at times from the tomb. Jerome tells us that Andrew's body was afterwards taken to Constantinople by the Emperor Constantine, who was a Christian. He buried it in a church he had built in honour of the Apostles.

In the union flag of England, Ireland, and Scotland, the last-named kingdom is represented by the cross of St Andrew, he having been, in Romish times, regarded as Scotland's patron saint.

SAINT JAMES THE GREAT.

COLLECT FOR SAINT JAMES THE APOSTLE'S DAY.

GRANT, O merciful God, that as thine holy Apostle Saint James, leaving his father and all that he had, without delay, was obedient unto the calling of thy Son Jesus Christ, and followed him : so we, forsaking all worldly and carnal affections, may be evermore ready to follow thy holy commandments ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



HO does not long to go to Palestine, and tread the ground hallowed by the footsteps of Jesus? Surely no part of the Holy Land, Bethlehem and Calvary excepted, is more interesting than the Sea of Galilee!* It is the same beautiful lake it was when our blessed Lord frequented its shores, and when those poor fishermen, but great Apostles, you are reading about, cast their nets into its waters. You have heard how two of those Apostles received the crown of martyrdom. James did not follow Peter and Andrew to the martyr's tomb, but went before them. He was, the Evangelists tell us, the son of Zebedee and

* In the Hebrew language all lakes are called seas.

Salome. He was born in Galilee ; in what part is not exactly known. But as Peter and Andrew, James and John were partners in business, they all probably belonged to the same city, Bethsaida. James, the son of Zebedee, is frequently called "James the Great." Perhaps this title was given him because he was much older than the other Apostle of the same name, who is often styled "James the Less."

Zebedee, though a fisherman, was not very poor, for when Jesus called James and John to follow him, they left their father Zebedee in the ship "with the hired servants."¹ The Jews say that Zebedee had many servants, but be that as it may, whatever were the brothers' worldly prospects, they, like Peter and Andrew, forsook all to become the disciples of Jesus. Happy are those who are able and willing to give up all that hinders them from walking in the path whither Jesus would lead them ! What faith these fishermen had in the Saviour ! They did not stay to ask him any questions as to how they were to live ; what dangers and difficulties they would meet with ; or what duties at home they ought rather to attend to. With them it was simply—Jesus calls, and we obey the call. Zebedee was too old to go, but he did not stand in the way of his sons'

departure ; and their mother, we know, was a believer in Jesus.

Some months after his call, James was promoted to the position of an Apostle, with power to heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, and cast out devils. He was one of the peculiar favourites of our Lord, being often, like Peter and John, allowed to remain with him when the other Apostles were excluded. He was present at the raising of the daughter of Jairus, and at the transfiguration, and was with Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane. The Saviour gave him and his brother John the name of Boanerges, or the sons of thunder. He knew that their zeal would be so great, that, fearing nothing, they would, as it were, thunder the gospel into men's ears, startling and arousing all who heard them. Some have thought that the name Boanerges was given them because they wished to call down fire from heaven upon the Samaritans for not receiving Jesus. When we read this incident in the lives of these brothers, we must admire their zeal and devotion to the Saviour, which made them feel such indignation at the want of respect shown to him. Jesus, however, reprov'd them. Love and forbearance were what he taught, not revenge. Elijah had indeed called down fire from heaven, but it was to save his life ; the Apostles were only led by human

passion, and knew not what spirit they were of. Jesus told them he had come to save men's lives, not to destroy them.

It was soon after Jesus had informed his disciples of his approaching death and resurrection that Salome, the mother of James and John, knowing that our Lord had promised to his Apostles that they should sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel, came to him and made this request, "Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom."¹ She thought Jesus would shortly reign as a king on earth, and was anxious to secure the places nearest his throne for her sons. Our Lord told her that she had mistaken the nature of his kingdom, which was a heavenly, not an earthly one; and the most honourable places in it were not his to give, but they would be given to those for whom they were prepared by his Father. As a mere man, or mediator, Jesus could not promise his disciples places in heaven, but as God he could; for at one time he said, "*I* appoint unto you a kingdom;"² "*I* give unto them eternal life."³ When the other Apostles heard of Salome's request, they were very indignant. Jesus, however, called them unto him, and told them that, if they wished to be great and

¹ Matt. xx. 21.

² Luke xxii. 29.

³ John x. 28.

honourable, there must be no strife or selfishness among them, but they were to be meek and lowly, and ever willing to minister to the wants of others ; to be ready to drink the cup of sorrow he drank of, and in all things to follow the example he set them of humility, love, and patience.

After the transfiguration on the mount, and the scene in Gethsemane, we hear but little more of James individually in the Bible. He was one of the congregation of the faithful who assembled in Jerusalem after the ascension, and from that time his name does not occur in the Scriptures, until his death is recorded by St Luke ; though, for the fourteen years he lived after his divine Master had ascended into heaven, he laboured indefatigably as an Apostle of the Lord Jesus. On him a cloven tongue of fire sat on the day of Pentecost, and he spoke with other tongues as the Spirit gave him utterance, and many wonders and signs were done by him. He was, with the other Apostles, imprisoned by the high-priest and the Sadducees, but the Lord was his keeper, and in the night the angel of the Lord opened the prison doors, and set him and his companions free. No fear had the son of thunder of the terrible Sanhedrim and its instruments of torture and death, but he rejoiced that he was counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake.

Though the religion of Jesus spread rapidly, there were still in Jerusalem multitudes of Jews who would gladly have seen the whole body of believers exterminated. The king of the Jews at that time was Herod Agrippa the First. He was the grandson of Herod the Great, who slew the innocents, and being a favourite with the Emperor Claudius, he was made king of Judæa, Samaria, and Abilene. He was a zealous supporter of the Jewish law, and a staunch upholder of the rites and institutions of his country. Being withal a cruel and ambitious prince, he was very willing to please the majority of his subjects by harassing the Christians. In the persecution raised by him against the followers of Christ, the holy Apostle James, the zealous and earnest preacher, was called upon to drink his share of the bitter cup Christ had drunk before him. The prophecy of Jesus was fulfilled, "Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with."¹ The following is the short account St Luke gives us of the death of the first Apostolic martyr :— "Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the Church. And he killed James, the brother of John, with the sword."² In the history of the early Church we

¹ Matt. xx. 23.

² Acts xii. 1, 2.

learn a few more particulars. Clemens Alexandrinus says that as James was being led to the place of execution, the soldier who had accused him before the tribunal was so struck with the courage and constancy displayed by the Apostle, that he fell at his feet and implored forgiveness for what he had said against him. James raised him up, and embracing him, said, "Peace, my son, peace be to thee, and the pardon of thy faults." The soldier publicly professed himself to be a Christian. He was immediately condemned to death, and was beheaded with the Apostle.

Not for James the martyr would the band of believers weep, but for themselves. He was safe with Jesus, they had yet to pass through the fire which was fast kindling around them. In the Church there was mourning. The Jews were pleased, and the politic king "proceeded further to take Peter also. Then were the days of unleavened bread."¹ The mighty zealot of the Mosaic law, the observer of all legal ceremonies, he who was never absent from the daily sacrifice, knew that it was unlawful at that season to put any one to death, so he had Peter imprisoned in chains, intending after Easter to bring him forth, doubtless with the design of further pleasing the

¹ Acts xii. 3.

Jews by beheading him as he had done James. His rage was great when he found Peter had escaped out of his hands, and he had no mercy upon the unfortunate soldiers who guarded the prison. Shortly afterwards Herod went to Cæsarea, not to trouble himself about the Christians, but to make war against the Tyrians and Sidonians. His mind being fully occupied with the cares of state, schemes of worldly ambition, and legal ceremonies, Herod probably scarcely bestowed a passing thought upon the miseries he had brought upon the followers of Jesus. But God heard the cry of his chosen ones, and his avenging hand soon fell upon their persecutor. The Tyrians and Sidonians, knowing that it would be greatly against their interest to be at war with Herod, desired peace, so they "made Blastus, the king's chamberlain, their friend,"¹ probably by bribery. Herod was persuaded to give them an audience. In the morning, he entered the theatre magnificently attired in a robe of cloth, woven with silver, and having ascended a throne he made an oration to the people. The rays of the morning sun, darting upon his shining dress, caused it to be so dazzlingly bright that "the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. And immediately the angel of the Lord

¹ Acts xii. 20.

smote him, because he gave not God the glory : and he was eaten of worms.”¹ He was carried to his palace by his attendants, where, after enduring the most racking torture for five days, he died.

Enraptured by the glorious prospect before him, the blessed martyr, James, would scarce feel the stroke of the executioner which hurried his happy spirit to paradise. Slowly, as if to prove how utterly worthless wealth and rank are in the hour of suffering and death, the wretched Herod sank into hell. “Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his !”²

It is remarkable that the Herod who slew the infants of Bethlehem and the coasts thereof died, very shortly after that barbarous act of cruelty, of a disease very similar to that which attacked his grandson in the theatre of Cæsarea. A short sketch of the life of Herod the Great, though not immediately connected with our subject, must be so interesting that I cannot refrain from giving it. When Herod was made king of the Jews, the beautiful though wicked Cleopatra, queen of Egypt, was in the height of her power, and Herod was not a little mixed up with her affairs, although she failed in her attempts to captivate him. It was about the year 37 B.C. that Herod ascended the throne of Judæa, and from that time till his

¹ Acts xii. 22, 23.

² Num. xxiii. 10.

death domestic crimes and troubles formed a great portion of his history. He had a very beautiful and noble-minded wife, named Mariamne, whom he loved most ardently ; but his happiness with her was of short duration, for, having three years after his marriage wilfully caused her brother Aristobulus, a very handsome young man, to be drowned while bathing, all her love for Herod turned to indignation and loathing. She upbraided her husband with the murder of her beloved brother, and refused to be reconciled to him. Herod became angry, but his love for Mariamne was so great that he could not long bear any resentment towards her. She, however, had a bitter enemy in Salome, Herod's sister, who did all she could to procure her destruction. Salome accused the innocent Mariamne of the worst crimes, and succeeded in bringing her victim before judges who were resolved upon condemning her. Mariamne was executed, meeting her fate with heroic firmness. No sooner was she dead than all Herod's ardent love for her returned, and he was seized with the most violent remorse for having caused her death. His agony of mind was so great that it seemed as if divine vengeance had fallen upon him. Frequently would he call for her and loudly lament her loss. He sought to divert his mind in feasts and

assemblies, but to no purpose, and he would desire his servants to call for their late royal mistress as if she were still alive and could hear them. At length he ceased to give any attention to public affairs. About that time a pestilential disease carried off the greater part of the people, and many of his best and most esteemed friends were among the victims, and all men suspected that this calamity had been brought upon them by the anger of God for the murder of Mariamne. Herod became more and more desponding; he retired into a desert place and there lost his reason altogether. Contrary to the expectations of all his physicians he ultimately recovered, but his heart was in no way softened. He boldly threw off the mask of religion, and tried to do away with the law of Moses. The Jews were very indignant, and a conspiracy was formed to murder him in the theatre. The plot, however, was discovered, and Herod found it necessary to provide for his own safety and guard against rebellion. He restored and fortified Samaria, calling it Sebaste, and converted the tower of Strato into a city and seaport, giving it the name of Cæsarea. He built great towers in Jerusalem, calling them by different names. The most beautiful he named after his unfortunate, but never-forgotten Queen Mariamne. The indigna-

tion of the Jews at last rose to such a pitch that Herod found it necessary to conciliate them, so he undertook to rebuild the temple on a scale of the greatest magnificence. For nine years he employed eighteen thousand men constantly upon it, and Josephus says it was the most beautiful edifice that had ever been seen or heard of. In the superstructure there were stones of the whitest marble, upwards of sixty-seven feet long, more than seven feet high, and nine broad. Well might the disciples speak of the "goodly stones"¹ of the temple. The lintels of the doors of the temple were very high, and were adorned with embroidered veils with their flowers of purple; and over these was spread out a golden vine, with its branches hanging down from a great height. There were nine gates, thickly coated inside and out with gold and silver. And there was one without the holy house which far surpassed the others in beauty. It was larger than the rest of the gates, and was made of Corinthian brass, the most precious metal among the ancients, and was ornamented in a most costly manner with gold and silver. This is supposed to have been the gate called "Beautiful,"² where sat the lame man who was healed by Peter and John. The inner temple or sanctuary was covered

¹ Luke xxi. 5.² Acts iii. 2.

on every side with plates of gold, so that when the sun rose upon it, it reflected such a dazzling lustre that the eye of the spectator could not bear its radiance. But it is quite impossible for me to enter into a minute description of this magnificent and immense work of art. Though Herod was said to have finished the temple, yet the Jews continued to add to its splendour many years after that monarch's death, which explains what the Jews said to Jesus, "Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?"¹

While the temple was in course of erection, Herod's domestic troubles increased rather than diminished. His two sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, inherited the lofty spirit of their mother Mariamne, and no doubt they often felt bitterly towards their father for the share he had in their mother's death. Their wicked aunt Salome hated them as she had done her sister-in-law, and did all she could to incense Herod against them. At last they were by Herod's orders strangled in prison. They were both married men. The younger, Aristobulus, was the grandfather of Drusilla and Bernice, who are mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles as being at Cæsarea when Paul was a prisoner there. Another of his sons Herod

¹ John ii. 20.

ordered to be led to execution when he himself was dying, but this son richly deserved his punishment. The miserable king had entered upon the last year of his life when our Saviour was born. "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa, in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judæa: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also."¹ Oh, how like the treacherous Herod! He who could sport with his brother-in-

¹ Matt. ii. 1-8.

law after he had made all the arrangements for his murder, and could persuade the unsuspecting youth to plunge into the water and swim to the servants who were waiting to drown him, and could afterwards pretend to be overwhelmed with grief at the untimely death of Aristobulus, would find no difficulty in professing to the sages of the east anxiety to worship the infant Saviour. Well might Jesus have called him a fox, as he did his son Herod Antipas. How Joseph and Mary escaped with the babe into Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod, you know. "Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men."¹ If we did not know that everything related in the Bible is true, we should doubt the possibility of a civilised man being guilty of such atrocity, which remains an unparalleled instance of cruelty, if one of the last acts of the wretched Herod were not equal to it. Not long after the murder of the innocents, Herod was seized with a dreadful disorder, which caused the most excruciating agony—worms fed upon him, and his breath became so

¹ Matt. ii. 16.

loathsome that no one who could avoid it ventured near him. The more he suffered the fiercer he grew, and a few days before his death, feeling that his end was near, he sent for all the principal men of the Jewish nation wherever they lived. Under pain of death they were to obey the summons. A great number accordingly assembled at Jericho, where Herod was then staying, and were immediately, by the king's command, shut up in the hippodrome. Herod then sent for his sister Salome, and told her that, as he knew his death would be the cause of great rejoicing, he was determined that it should be also the cause of great mourning. He therefore ordered her that she should, as soon as he had breathed his last, have all the nobles who were confined in the hippodrome shot with darts, and then there would be greater mourning at his funeral than had ever been heard of at the funeral of any king before him. This barbarous order was given only five days before he died. One ineffectual attempt he made to commit suicide, and shortly after expired. Such was the end of Herod the Great. Alas for human greatness! He was carried to his sepulchre on a golden bier, which was inlaid with precious stones and covered with purple. On his head was placed a diadem, and above it a crown of gold. His mortal remains were thus,

with all the pomp of royalty, carried to their last resting-place, but whither had fled his black and guilty soul?

I must not omit to say that Salome did not obey Herod's orders, for she, as soon as he was dead, set all the nobles who were confined in the hippodrome at liberty.

Whether or not devout men, as in the case of the first martyr Stephen, were permitted to carry the Apostle James to his burial, we know not. The stranger who visits Jerusalem is shown a slab upon which, it is said, St James laid his head when he was about to receive the stroke of the executioner. But if we only reflect a little, we can scarcely suppose that the poor persecuted Christians could have preserved this memorial of the murdered Apostle; or if they did for a few years, how could they, after Jerusalem had been razed to the ground, and presented to the beholder only a confused mass of ruins, say on what particular stone James had been beheaded?

It is more than probable that James the Great never preached the gospel out of the Holy Land, though the Spaniards say that he visited Spain. They regard him as their patron saint, and represent him in pictures on a white horse, his harness being studded with escalop shells. The Spaniards

have an order of knighthood called the Order of St James.

In England there are about three hundred and sixty churches dedicated to St James; possibly some of these may be meant for St James the Less, though not so stated.

SAINT JOHN.

COLLECT FOR SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST'S DAY.

MERCIFUL LORD, we beseech thee to cast thy bright beams of light upon thy Church, that it being enlightened by the doctrine of thy blessed Apostle and Evangelist Saint John, may so walk in the light of thy truth, that it may at length attain to the light of everlasting life ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



JOHN, the best beloved of Jesus, Evangelist, Apostle, and Prophet ! You will have seen that beautiful picture of "The Last Supper," where St John is represented leaning upon the bosom of his Lord. What a lovely face John has ! The expression, so soft and gentle, as with a sorrowful heart he listens to the parting words of the Saviour. With the name of St John is associated everything that excites our love and admiration. Full of affection and gentleness, he was yet one of the "sons of thunder ;"¹ his zeal in his Master's service being unbounded. He was brother of James

¹ Mark iii. 17.

the Great, and was the youngest of the Apostles. With Peter, Andrew, and James, he was called to be a disciple of our Lord, after the miraculous draught of fishes. We are led to believe that John was acquainted with Jesus before this event took place, as he is generally supposed to have been one of the "two disciples"¹ who were standing with their master, John the Baptist, when Jesus passed by. The Baptist pointed out Jesus to them, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God!"² They followed Jesus to his home, "and abode with him that day."³

From the time that John was, with the eleven others, made an Apostle, he enjoyed the peculiar favour of Jesus. Like Peter and James, he was allowed to be present at the raising of the daughter of Jairus, and at the Transfiguration on the Mount. He was also with the Saviour in the Garden of Gethsemane. It was for John, as well as for James, that Salome made the request to Jesus which excited the indignation of the other Apostles.

You have read in the preceding chapter, how John's zeal led him to wish to call down fire from heaven upon the Samaritans. We have another instance of his fervour carrying him too far. He one day saw a man, who was not among the

¹ John i. 37.

² John i. 36.

³ John i. 39.

followers of Jesus, casting out devils in his name, and forbade him doing it. When John told Jesus what he had done, the Saviour desired him not to forbid him; for if the man were not against him, he must be for him. This person was probably one of the disciples of John the Baptist; and the very fact of his casting out devils in the name of Jesus proved that he was, in some degree, a believer in the Messiah, and had miraculous powers given him.

We now come to that part of the life of John which is most touching and interesting. Judas had promised the chief priests that he would betray Jesus unto them, and the Saviour, who knew all things, made preparation for the last meal he would partake with his disciples before his death. He sent Peter and John into the city to make ready the supper. "And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve Apostles with him."¹ Towards the end of the supper, Jesus washed his disciples' feet. After he had sat down again, he became very sorrowful, and told his disciples that one of them should betray him. We can picture to ourselves their surprise and distress at these words. Each would look at the other to see if he could read in his countenance any signs of guilt; but no blush of shame betrays the guilty one. Knowing that Jesus never spoke

¹ Luke xxii. 14.

anything but the truth, each begins to doubt himself, and asks, "Is it I?"¹ The deceitful traitor affects ignorance, and says, "Is it I?"² Jesus said to him, "Thou hast said."³ These words, it would appear, were not heard by the rest of the Apostles, or were not understood by them; for Peter beckoned to John, who "was leaning on Jesus' bosom,"⁴ to ask him whom he meant. It was the custom for people in the east to recline on couches placed around tables; so John, who sat or reclined next to Jesus, could easily rest his head on the bosom of his Lord. How pathetically and modestly John speaks of himself in this scene! These are his words: "Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. He then, lying on Jesus' breast, saith unto him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, He it is to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot."⁵

After Judas had left the table, Jesus began to comfort his afflicted disciples. What can be more beautiful and affecting than his address to them, as written by St John? Jesus tells them not to

¹ Matt. xxvi. 22.

² Matt. xxvi. 25.

³ Matt. xxvi. 25.

⁴ John xiii. 23.

⁵ John xiii. 23-26.

be troubled, for he was going to prepare a place for them in heaven. He told them also, that if they loved him they were to keep his commandments ; and that he would pray to his Father to send his Holy Spirit to comfort them. Many other things did Jesus say in his farewell address, and concluded with the exquisite prayer which is found in the seventeenth chapter of St John's Gospel.

In the life of Peter, you will have read how John, with Peter and James, slept in the Garden of Gethsemane while Jesus was praying in agony on the ground ; and how *all* the disciples fled when they saw the soldiers seize upon Jesus. John, however, soon returned, and is supposed to have been the "other disciple"¹ who went with Peter into the palace of the high priest. Whether he were or not, we know that he was with Jesus on Calvary, together with the Virgin Mary, Mary the wife of Cleophas, his mother Salome, and Mary Magdalene. Of this sorrowful group, the Virgin excites our warmest sympathy. It is beyond our power to imagine the mother's agony as she gazed upon the mangled form of her Son. The bleeding temples, pricked with the thorns of his mock crown ; the swollen features, disfigured by blows ; the wounded back, cut by the scourge ; and the hands and feet, torn by the

¹ John xviii. 15.

nails, were as so many swords piercing her soul. Oh, surely the hardened hearts of the soldiers must have melted as they looked upon her! Near her stood John. What restrained him now from calling down fire from heaven to consume the tormentors of his dear Master? Perhaps he remembered the holy lesson Jesus had so lately taught them of love, meekness, and forbearance. Or perhaps he bore in mind that Jesus, whom he had seen walk upon the water, raise the dead, and at whose touch the lame walked, the blind saw, and the dumb spake, could without his aid deliver himself and come down from the cross. Or it might be, he knew that, for the sins of the world Jesus hung upon the cross, and the sacrifice must be completed. Or, possibly, the glorious example of patience and long-suffering before him, as he heard the prayer, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,"¹ awed his fiery spirit into submission. We know not what the inward conflict was; we are only told he stood by the cross. But I think almost every passion that man can feel must in turn have possessed him. Anger, indignation, love, pity, sorrow, and admiration must have been excited as he beheld the spectacle before him. Was Jesus conscious of the presence of those loved ones? He was. St

¹ Luke xxiii. 34.

John tells us that, when Jesus "saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he unto the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home." ¹

"Behold thy son!" For the future Mary must regard John as one who would supply the place of Jesus, and be as a son unto her.

"Behold thy mother!" As a son John was to provide for and protect the desolate and almost heart-broken Mary. Thus forgetful of his own torture, the expiring Saviour was mindful of the wants of her who had tended him in the manger, had sought him sorrowing in the temple, and who now, in speechless grief, witnessed his last sufferings. He was—

"A son that never did amiss,
That never shamed his mother's kiss,
Nor cross'd her fondest prayer :
Even from the tree he deign'd to bow
For her his agonizèd brow,—
Her, his sole earthly care."

Could Jesus have given John a greater proof of his confidence than by consigning his beloved mother to his custody? The Apostle's precious charge lived, it is believed, about fifteen years

¹ John xix. 26, 27.

after the crucifixion; during which time John nourished and protected her, as though she had indeed been his own mother.

After John had taken Mary to his home, (Joseph is supposed to have died some time before,) we hear nothing more of him till we find him with Peter listening to Mary Magdalene's account of her visit to the sepulchre. John accompanied Peter to the sepulchre, and found that Jesus had risen. Twice again is John spoken of as the "disciple whom Jesus loved." He was, with some others, fishing on the Sea of Galilee; all night they had toiled, and caught nothing. In the morning Jesus stood upon the shore, but the disciples did not know him. Jesus asked them if they had any meat? They said, No. He told them to cast their net on the right side of the ship. "They cast, therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. Therefore that disciple *whom Jesus loved* saith unto Peter, It is the Lord."¹ Jesus dined with the disciples on the shore. After dinner he addressed himself chiefly to Peter, and intimated what death he should die. "Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple *whom Jesus loved* following,"² and said, "Lord, what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is

¹ John xxi. 6, 7.

² John xxi. 20.

that to thee? Follow thou me. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die; yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die, but, if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"¹ Jesus meant "till I come" to destroy Jerusalem. John lived till after the destruction of that city, which event took place between thirty and forty years subsequent to the crucifixion.

A large portion of John's life, after the ascension, may be read in the Acts of the Apostles, though he is not mentioned often by name. We hear of him, with Peter, curing the lame man who lay at the gate of the temple called Beautiful, which miracle brought down upon the two Apostles the anger of the high priest and his friends. In consequence of this, Peter and John were imprisoned; but they were soon set at liberty again. John is also spoken of as being sent with Peter to carry the glad tidings of redemption to the Samaritans.

After this, excepting that he himself informs us, in the first chapter of the Book of Revelation, that he was banished to the Isle of Patmos, we know nothing more from Scripture of his history. Ecclesiastical writers inform us, that after the death of the Virgin Mary he lived chiefly at Ephesus,

¹ John xxi. 21-23.

and planted several churches in Asia Minor, the chief of which were those of Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. Tertullian tells us that the cruel Emperor Domitian ordered him to be thrown into a caldron of boiling oil ; but it harmed him not. There is a legend that a cup containing poison was given to John, and that he immediately drove out the poisonous nature of the draught in the shape of a serpent, and drank the liquid without sustaining any injury. In the old glass of the chapel of New College, Oxford, St John is represented (doubtless in allusion to the above) as holding a cup from which is issuing a serpent. The legend will remind us of our Lord's words : " They shall take up serpents ; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them."¹

Patmos, the place to which John was banished, was a lonely island in the Archipelago ; but not lonely to him whom Jesus loved. The glorified Saviour visited the exile, and beautiful visions transported the captive from earth to heaven. Who would not have willingly changed Domitian's gorgeous palace for the bare rock on which the Apostle stood when the door of heaven was opened, and he beheld Jehovah sitting on the throne in all his glorious majesty, and the blessed Jesus receiv-

¹ Mark xvi. 18.

ing the homage of "ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands!"¹ How must the Apostle have longed for wings to fly to his beloved Lord! Did Domitian ever hear such music as that which John heard when the elders sang a "new song?"² or did ever proud emperor possess such a city as that which the angels showed John?—a city of gold, with a wall of jasper and precious stones, and gates of pearls; and lighted with the glory of God and the Lamb. Well might John, when Christ said, "I come quickly,"³ respond, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."⁴ May we all be able to say from our hearts, Amen.

It was in Patmos that Jesus was seen and heard for the last time on earth. The island did not, after John left it, remain desolate, for towns were built upon it; and not very many years ago it possessed the best school for learning throughout the east. A monastery now stands upon the "great and high mountain,"⁵ from which John beheld the holy Jerusalem. While at Patmos John wrote the sublime Book of Revelation.

The wicked Domitian, who was noted for his cruelty and vice, having met with his reward at the hands of assassins, was succeeded by an emperor who recalled those who had been banished

¹ Rev. v. 11.² Rev. v. 9.³ Rev. xxii. 20.⁴ Rev. xxii. 20.⁵ Rev. xxi. 10.

by his predecessor. John consequently left Patmos, and returned to Asia Minor. He lived at Ephesus till he was a great age ; and when he was no longer able to preach to the people, he used to be taken to the church, and say only these words to them, " Little children, love one another." When his listeners asked him why he always said this, and no more, he replied, " Because it was the command of our Lord, and that if they did nothing else, this alone was enough."*

There is an interesting story told by Clemens Alexandrinus, showing the earnestness of St John's zeal and the strength of his love. A young man had embraced Christianity. John took very great interest in him ; he instructed him and baptized him. After a while, however, the youth fell into evil courses, and chose the most abandoned characters for his companions. With grief John at last heard that he had become captain of a band of robbers. Without loss of time the aged Apostle, regardless of his own peril, went to the mountains haunted by the banditti. He was seized by two of them, and was, at his own request, taken to their leader, who no sooner beheld his once loved and revered teacher than he fled. John pursued him, but, owing to the weight of years, was not able to overtake him : so he passionately besought

* Jerome's Commentary on the Galatians.

him to return. The conscience-stricken youth could not resist such love and devotion. He returned ; and the aged saint and the young penitent burst into tears when they met. Fervent were the prayers John offered for his companion, and he had the consolation of seeing him restored to his Christian privileges, and to the favour of God.

At Ephesus, after his return from Patmos, at the request of the ministers of the church St John wrote his Gospel, which may be considered in a great degree as a supplement to the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, as it contains much which the other Evangelists had omitted. The account of our Saviour's discourse with the woman of Samaria, of the cure of the infirm man at the pool of Bethesda, the description of the good shepherd and his sheep, the history of the raising of Lazarus, the act of washing his disciples' feet, his tender and consolatory discourse to his Apostles just before his suffering, his most beautiful prayer before quitting Olivet and after his resurrection, the command three times given to Peter to feed his flock, and other incidents connected with our Lord, are only to be found in St John's Gospel. This Gospel was written A.D. 97 or 98, more than twenty years after the destruction of Jerusalem. St John also wrote three short epistles. The first is calculated for all times and places, containing

most excellent rules for the conduct of Christians, and specially guarding the early Church against the pernicious principles and practices of a sect of heretics which had arisen, called Gnostics. The other epistles were addressed to particular persons : the one to an honourable lady, and the other to the hospitable Gaius.

John was pre-eminent for his simplicity and singleness of heart, his fervent piety, his unbounded benevolence, his unaffected modesty, humility, and meekness, and for his loving and gentle disposition.

He lived till he was nearly one hundred years old, and it is generally believed he died a natural death. One by one those who compose "the glorious company of the Apostles" had been withdrawn from their earthly labours, and great would be the mourning in the churches when the last of that chosen band was laid in the tomb. "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth : Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours ; and their works do follow them."¹

¹ Rev. xiv. 13.

SAINT PHILIP.

COLLECT FOR SAINT PHILIP AND SAINT JAMES'S DAY.

O ALMIGHTY GOD, whom truly to know is everlasting life ; Grant us perfectly to know thy Son, Jesus Christ, to be the way, the truth, and the life ; that, following the steps of thy holy Apostles, Saint Philip and Saint James, we may stedfastly walk in the way that leadeth to eternal life ; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.



—◆—
OE unto thee, Chorazin ! woe unto thee, Bethsaida ! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you.”¹ How must three at least of Christ’s listeners have trembled when they heard this denunciation from the lips of one who never spake but the truth ! Peter and Andrew were, as you know, born in Bethsaida ; and St John tells us that “ Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew

¹ Luke x. 13, 14.

and Peter.”¹ Doubtless all these Apostles had relations and friends near and dear to them in the doomed city—relations and friends whom they had, perhaps with tears, attempted to lead to Christ, but who had refused to listen, and continued hardened and impenitent. Capernaum was also included in the anathema of our Saviour. “And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee.”² How literally all that Christ foretold has come to pass! Bethsaida was then a rich and populous city—now five or six poor cottages, part of a large cistern, the ruins of a church, and a heap of broken columns, are all that remain of it. As to Capernaum, which was, when Jesus honoured it as his chief place of residence, in the highest state of prosperity, it has totally disappeared from the face of the earth. No trace of it can be found; though travellers have sought diligently for its ruins, they have failed even to discover its site. From the loftiest pinnacle of glory it has sunk into complete oblivion, and the place thereof knows it no more.

¹ John i. 44.² Matt. xi. 23, 24.

We hear nothing of Philip till his election to the discipleship, which important event of his life occurred the day after Andrew had taken his brother to Jesus. "The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me."¹ So Philip was the first chosen of the Apostles ; for though Peter and Andrew had conversed with Jesus before Philip had seen him, yet they were not invited to follow our Saviour till some months afterwards. There is no explanation given as to how it was that Philip at once obeyed Jesus and followed him, excepting that he was of "the city of Andrew and Peter,"² and consequently might have conversed with them about the expected Messiah. A divine power doubtless accompanied the command, "Follow me," for Jesus had as yet performed no miraculous works to prove that he was indeed the Son of God. Philip does not seem for one moment to have hesitated about what he should do, or to have questioned who it was who called him. No sooner was he elected than he began his labour of love. He "findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."³ It is evident from this passage that Philip was well acquainted with the

¹ John i. 43.² John i. 44.³ John i. 45.

writings of Moses and the prophets; and it has been further stated by ancient writers that he had received an excellent education. Some months after his call to the discipleship, he was promoted to the dignity of an Apostle. His name does not frequently occur in the holy writings.

Before our Saviour fed the multitude in the wilderness, he said to Philip, "Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? And this he said to prove him,"¹ or try his faith. "Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little."² It was no small quantity of bread that Philip named as being insufficient to distribute even sparingly among the company. A Roman penny, considered as equal to sevenpence-halfpenny of our money, would make their two hundred pence equal to six pounds five shillings with us. Besides, bread is now fully ten times dearer than it was then, so that in reality, according to our present ideas, Philip remarked that sixty or seventy pounds' worth of bread would not be sufficient for each to have a little. What a vast multitude there must have been! How many persons we do not know. There were five thousand men, but we are not told how many women and children. Every circumstance connected with this

¹ John vi. 5, 6.

² John vi. 7.

miracle is deeply interesting. John the Baptist had shortly before been beheaded in the Castle of Macherus, which was not far from Bethabara. His faithful disciples (some of them now Apostles of Jesus) were near the scene of his execution, and took up his body and buried it, no doubt at great personal risk. Who can but admire the courage and devotion of these good men, for they had reason to fear that the malice of Herodias would not be confined to John, but would be also extended to his disciples and friends. Their sorrowful duty performed, they hastened to tell Jesus. We will suppose, for it was not improbable, that Andrew and John assisted in the burial of their late master. The Apostles had been sent out, two and two, by Jesus to preach the gospel, heal the sick, and cast out devils. Perhaps inclination had led Andrew and John to the neighbourhood of Bethabara, so that, while they neglected not the work Jesus had given them to do, they could at the same time visit spots dear to them as associated with the Baptist's ministry. Their labours came to an abrupt conclusion. Their late beloved master was put to death, and they lost no time in hastening to Jesus to tell him the sad story. Many a long mile would they have to travel before they again reached the shore of Galilee; but every journey has an end, and ere very long they arrived

at the place where their Lord was. All the Apostles, it seems, returned at the same time, and "gathered themselves together unto Jesus."¹ Worn out both in body and mind no doubt they were, so how welcome to the wearied ones would be the invitation of Jesus, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while."² The little band entered a ship, and sailed to another part of the shore, where they landed, and ascended one of the mountains that slope gently down to the lake, "and there he sat with his disciples."³ How long they rested I cannot tell, but I fear only a short time. Perhaps those who had assisted at the burial of John had not finished their account of the Baptist's last moments, when Jesus "lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company"⁴ coming. It appears that the people had seen them enter the ship, and came and ran round by the shore to the place to which Jesus and his disciples had retired. When our Saviour beheld this vast concourse hurrying towards him, how excusable would it have been if he had concealed himself and his jaded disciples. For we find that before he withdrew himself from the cities, the people had been so pressing with their wants that he and his disciples "had no leisure so much as to eat;"⁵ but

¹ Mark vi. 30.² Mark vi. 31.³ John vi. 3.⁴ John vi. 5.⁵ Mark vi. 31.

no, our Lord's compassionate heart would not allow him to disappoint the multitude, who "were as sheep not having a shepherd,"¹ therefore he came down the mountain and met them, "and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing."² So interested were the multitude in all Jesus was doing and saying that they appear not to have noticed the flight of time, and evening found them still in the desert, far from their homes, listening to the great teacher. Our Saviour must indeed for the time have fascinated them. They had travelled on foot many miles, bringing their sick and children with them, and had passed a whole day without having anything to eat, and yet they complained not of hunger, nor of fatigue. The twelve disciples at length interfered, but not until it was too late to dismiss the people to their homes fasting. The only plan that suggested itself to their minds was to send the multitude to the villages and towns near there, to lodge for the night and buy victuals, and this they advised Jesus to do. But he said, "They need not depart; give ye them to eat."³ The poor disciples confessed that they had but five barley loaves and two small fishes. How homely was the fare of Jesus and his Apostles,—dry bread and a little

¹ Mark vi. 34.² Luke ix. 11.³ Matt. xiv. 16.

fish. Surely we ought not to complain if our table be not provided with dainties. After a little further conversation with Philip and the rest of the disciples, Jesus told them to make the men sit down on the grass. He directed them how they were to be seated, in companies of hundreds and fifties—one hundred facing another hundred, and fifty across each end. Thus arranged, all would be more easily served, and the number more readily ascertained. How the women and children were placed we are not told, but we know they were not overlooked. Not one out of that vast multitude refused to follow the directions of Jesus, but, in perfect order, seated themselves on the grass, as they were told, though doubtless many looked at the five loaves and two fishes, and wondered if that were all the food provided for them. “Then he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and, looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude.”¹ Many agents, doubtless, were employed in this stupendous miracle. The loaves and fishes were multiplied in the hands of the Apostles, who must have employed others to assist them; for how could twelve men, in the space of about two hours, serve several thousand hungry people? “And

¹ Luke ix. 16.

they did eat, and were all filled.”¹ *All*—men, women, and children—partook of a hearty meal, and when their hunger was appeased, more food was left than before they began to break their long fast. They were not, however, allowed to carry any away. The precious relics were given by Jesus to the disciples. The twelve Apostles gathered up the fragments, a basket full each. The multitude were, after seeing this wonderful miracle, so convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, that they wished at once to make him a king, believing that the Messiah, when he did come, would reign as a temporal monarch. But our Saviour would not allow it: his kingdom was not of this world, and he had no wish to disturb the government of any earthly monarch, so he desired his disciples to get into a ship, and go across the lake, while he sent the multitude away.

The feeding five thousand men, and perhaps as many or more women and children, with five loaves and two fishes, was one of the greatest miracles Jesus performed, and is the only one related by all four Evangelists. The place where this mighty work was done is still pointed out to travellers, and is called “the multiplication of bread.”

We hear nothing more of Philip by name in the

¹ Luke ix. 17.

holy writings till the closing scene of our Saviour's life was near at hand ; but doubtless every day, from that on which Jesus called him till the ascension, was laden with incident worthy of record. And some of his nights, also, how full of peril and heart-stirring scenes they were ! That which followed the day on which was performed the miracle of the loaves and fishes, what a fearful night it was to Philip and the rest of the Apostles ! Overtaken by a storm on the lake, they were for hours tossed about, expecting every moment a watery grave. They were stupified with fear, and when Jesus, walking on the raging sea to them, entered the ship and stilled the winds, Philip and the rest, forgetting the miracle of the loaves, "were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered."¹ Then think of that fearful night when Philip and the rest forsook Jesus, and fled from Gethsemane ; and the nights of sorrow that followed, till that evening when their risen Lord appeared in the midst of them and said, "Peace be unto you."²

The Greek proselytes, who wished to see Jesus, addressed themselves to Philip, who, with Andrew, delivered their message to our Saviour. Both of the names Andrew and Philip are Greek. Why these two Apostles had not names common among

¹ Mark vi. 51.

² John xx. 26.

the Jews given them is not known, but probably they may have travelled into the neighbouring districts, such as Cæsarea, where Greek was the language spoken by the mixed population, and found it advisable to adopt Greek names so long as they sojourned in those parts, and afterwards retained their adopted names. This appears probable from the fact of the Greeks, when they wished to speak to Jesus, addressing themselves to Philip, who immediately consulted Andrew, and these two, after telling Jesus that certain Greeks desired to see him, evidently introduced the foreigners to him. It would seem as though Philip and Andrew alone among the Apostles knew the Greek language.

When Jesus was comforting and encouraging his poor disciples, just before the last supper, and was speaking of his Father, Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us."¹ Strange request to fall from the lips of a chosen servant of the Lord, and one who was well acquainted with the Holy Scriptures. Had he not read how God had said to Moses, "Thou canst not see my face : for there shall no man see me, and live?"² And had not Jesus declared that "no man hath seen the Father?"³ On Philip betraying this ignorance, our Saviour returned him this gentle reproof,

¹ John xiv. 8. ² Exod. xxxiii. 20. ³ John vi. 46.

"Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."¹

"No man hath seen God at any time."² All the manifestations or appearances of the Deity were made by the Son, one of the three persons of the Holy Trinity, the one God. Christ it was who led the Israelites through the wilderness. St Paul says, "Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents."³ He it was who appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, and to Moses. He manifested himself under various titles. He was the angel who so often appeared to the patriarchs and others. As captain of the Lord of hosts he appeared to Joshua at Jericho. Often is he called Jehovah, translated Lord. He is called at least a dozen times by that great name in the chapter which gives an account of his interview with Abraham in the plains of Mamre. Our Lord assures us that God the Father never has appeared to any man at any time, and Jehovah is a name never

¹ John xiv. 9, 10.² John i. 18.³ 1 Cor. x. 9.

given to the angels, but is always confined to the great being who made heaven and earth. The Word of God therefore is the Jehovah here spoken of. The prophet Isaiah was favoured with a vision of the Almighty, truly sublime and beautiful. "In the year that king Uzziah died," he says, "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple."¹ In the fifth verse of the chapter the same being is called, "The King, the Lord of hosts." The Evangelist St John tells us that the person whom the prophet saw in this vision was our Saviour Christ. "These things said Isaiah, when he saw his glory, and spake of him."² Oh, what marvellous love did this mighty Prince, this great Jehovah, this Lord of hosts display when he at length appeared as a weak and helpless infant in the stable of Bethlehem, when he dwelt with, and shared the labours of, the humble Joseph, when he selected as his companions poor fishermen, and mingled with the meanest of the sons of earth! He was the Word who created the world, and yet was led as a lamb to the slaughter. He, the Prince of Israel, was buffeted, spat upon, mocked, and then fastened to the accursed tree, and all to save us, to open to us the gates of Paradise, that we might share with him the glories of his Father's home. "Worthy is the Lamb that

¹ Isa. vi. 1-3.² John xii. 41.

was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.”¹ “Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.”²

Philip is mentioned as being with the rest of the Apostles at Jerusalem after the ascension, and after then his name does not occur in the Holy Scriptures.

He is often confused with Philip the deacon, who preached and baptized in Samaria. It was generally believed by the ancients that Philip was married, and it was said by some that he had daughters, who resolved never to marry; but the women alluded to were, doubtless, the four daughters of Philip the deacon, “virgins which did prophesy.”³ The Apostle Philip, in the distribution of the different parts of the world that was made by the Apostles under the divine direction, had—so we are told by Nicephorus and others—Upper Asia given to him as the sphere of his ministry. There he laboured with the greatest diligence, baptizing the converts, healing the sick, planting churches, and appointing ministers. After remaining in those parts some years, he went, we are told by the same authority, into Phrygia, now part of Turkey in Asia, where he, like Peter, fol-

¹ Rev. v. 12.

² Rev. v. 14.

³ Acts xxi. 9.

lowed his divine Master, and was crucified. It was in a city of Phrygia, named Hierapolis, now called Aleppo, famous for its wealth and idolatry, that he suffered martyrdom. Clemens Alexandrinus says the inhabitants of Hierapolis were addicted to the grossest idolatry. Philip was much distressed at seeing them so deluded, and prayed constantly for them that they might be brought to the knowledge of Jesus. He then pointed out to the people the folly of their worship, at the same time telling them of the true God, and preaching the Gospel to them. They became quite ashamed of their idolatry, and many of them turned to the Lord. But as was usually the case whenever marked success attended the labours of the early Christians, the rulers of the people rose up to oppose them: so the magistrates of Hierapolis seized upon Philip, put him into prison, and then had him unmercifully whipped and scourged. He was then crucified, and, while hanging on the cross, stoned to death. It is said that, at his execution, the earth began to quake under the feet of the murderers; and they in their terror acknowledged and bewailed their sin, which was bringing the divine vengeance upon them, and the earthquake ceased. Philip had a constant and faithful companion in his beloved sister Mariamne. She, assisted by St Bartholemew, took the martyred

Apostle down from the cross, and buried him in or near Hierapolis.

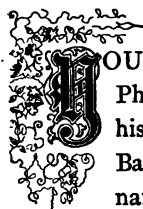
Surely there could not be many scenes more interesting for a painter to depict than the burial of Philip. It would probably be night when the devoted sister and her friend, the holy Bartholomew, performed the mournful ceremony. Perhaps the Apostle, with his wounded limbs, (for he had been fastened to a cross by the cruel Phrygians, but had, when the earth quaked, been taken down and set at liberty,) could but little assist Mariamne in the melancholy task of arranging decently the disfigured body, bruised and broken as it would be. They laid Philip in the tomb, and, like their divine Master, prayed for their enemies.

“ Then cheerly to their work again,
With hearts new-braced and set
To run, untired, love's blessed race,
As meet for those who, face to face,
Over the grave their Lord have met.”

SAINT BARTHOLOMEW.

COLLECT FOR SAINT BARTHOLOMEW THE APOSTLE'S DAY.

O ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who didst give to thine Apostle Bartholomew grace truly to believe and to preach thy Word ; Grant, we beseech thee, unto thy Church, to love that word which he believed, and both to preach and receive the same ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



YOU cannot have read the life of St Philip without wishing to hear more of his fellow-labourer, the holy Apostle St Bartholomew, who is also known by the name of Nathanael. It is not distinctly told us in the Bible that Nathanael and Bartholomew were the same person ; but there can be little doubt of it, for Matthew, Mark, and Luke speak of Bartholomew, and say nothing of Nathanael, and John speaks only of Nathanael, and never mentions the name of Bartholomew. The three first Evangelists place Bartholomew among the Apostles, and couple him with Philip as John did Philip with Nathanael. And it would seem *Nathanael* was one of the twelve, from the fact of

St John speaking of him as being with the disciples Peter, Thomas, James, John, and two others, who are supposed to be Andrew and Philip, on the Sea of Tiberias, when "Jesus stood on the shore"¹ after his resurrection; and then John expressly tells us that this was "now the third time that Jesus showed himself to *his disciples* after that he was risen from the dead."² It was evidently only to the Apostles that our Saviour had appeared on the two previous occasions the Evangelist alludes to. The first was on the evening of the day Jesus rose from the dead, when all were assembled in a room but Thomas, "one of the twelve."³ The second was eight days afterwards, when "again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them."⁴

The word Bar, in Syriac, signifies son of, hence Bar-Tholmai, or Bartholomew, means son of Tholmai or Tholomew, so that this Apostle might be spoken of as Nathanael Bartholomew, or Bar-Tholmai. Peter was sometimes called Bar-Jona, son of Jona. Bartimæus, the blind beggar, was the "son of Timæus."⁵ In the case of the magician St Paul struck with blindness, he is called "Bar-Jesus,"⁶ son of a man of the name of Jesus. Would that we had been favoured with more particulars of the life of Nathanael Bartholomew, if I

¹ John xxi. 4.² John xxi. 14.³ John xx. 24.⁴ John xx. 26.⁵ Mark x. 46.⁶ Acts xiii. 6.

may so call him, than what can be gathered from the Scriptures and the works of ancient writers ; but the little that is known of him cannot fail to inspire every one with the greatest respect for his character. Our Lord himself pointed him out as a pattern of simplicity and sincerity, by saying, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!"¹ A rare sight, and worthy of being admired, was the man that even Jesus, who knew his every thought, pronounced free from deception of any kind, and perfectly upright. Of Nathanael's family, trade or profession, but little is known. St John tells us that he was "of Cana in Galilee ;"² and some have supposed he was descended from a noble family, even the Ptolemies of Egypt, though in our Saviour's time he and his near relations were in humble circumstances. It is most likely that his calling was the same as that of those with whom we find him on the Lake of Galilee after the resurrection of Jesus.

You will remember that Philip had no sooner received the invitation to follow Christ than he sought out Nathanael, and said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write : Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."³ But Nathanael doubted. He was not ignorant of what the law and the prophets had

¹ John i. 47.² John xxi. 2.³ John i. 45.

stated relating to the Messiah, but from that he knew that Christ was to come "of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was ;"¹ and Nazareth was such a notoriously wicked place that he exclaimed, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?"² For thirty years had Jesus, a perfect model of every virtue, dwelt in Nazareth, and yet Nathanael, who lived only four miles off, had never even heard of him till now. So strong was the prejudice against the Nazarenes, that no one looked for goodness among them, and the holy family of Joseph passed their days unnoticed and uncared for by the short-sighted world around them. Most likely Nathanael had, from his boyhood, been accustomed to visit Nazareth. He might more than once, perchance, have passed the workshop of the carpenter, Joseph, and have seen the master and a comely youth busily employed with their tools, but he saw no more. Had he known who the youth was, he would have prostrated himself before him, exclaiming, "My Lord and my God ;"³ or perhaps he might, before entering the city, have stopped at a well to quench his thirst, and while resting there, a matron may have come to the fountain, accompanied by a youth, who, with affectionate care, assisted his mother to raise some water, and then, lest the

¹ John vii. 42.² John i. 46.³ John xx. 28.

burden should be too heavy, helped to carry the pitcher back into the city. Such a novel sight in Nazareth would excite the wonder and sympathy of the pious and warm-hearted Nathanael ; and we can fancy him following this pattern of filial love to his humble home. Perhaps he would have entered the dwelling, poor as it was, but he had no right to intrude upon the privacy of even a despised Nazarene, and he would pass on, wondering whether there were not, after all, some good in Nazareth. Had he known who that youth was, he would have knelt before him, exclaiming, " Rabbi, thou art the Son of God ; thou art the King of Israel." ¹ Or perhaps on one occasion of his visiting Nazareth, a funereal procession may have passed him, and first among the mourners he may have observed a newly-made widow, supported by her son. Out of reverence for the dead, Nathanael may have stood with head uncovered till the melancholy train had gone by. But had he known who the son of the chief mourner was, he would, in solemn awe, have bowed his head to the dust while the Holy One passed. There is abundant scope for the imagination in picturing scenes connected with the private life of our Saviour, but those I have drawn are not altogether imaginative. Jesus, we know, probably worked at

¹ John i. 49.

his reputed father's trade till he was thirty years of age, for he is not only called "the carpenter's son,"¹ but "the carpenter,"² and the well now called the Virgin's Well, just outside of Nazareth, still remains. Lord Lindsay, in his "Letters on the Holy Land," says, "Every scene of our Saviour's life at Nazareth is marked by chapels and churches. There is a well, however, named after the Virgin, to the east of the city, which we gazed at with evident interest. It still supplies Nazareth with water, and thither, without a doubt, came the Virgin mother and her Saviour son, day after day, to draw water, as we also saw the daughters of Nazareth coming." And Joseph, we may suppose, died and was buried in Nazareth some time before our Saviour commenced his ministry. There can be no doubt that Mary was a widow when Jesus, while hanging on the cross, consigned her to the care of St John; and it is believed she had been so for some years. But I must proceed with the history of Nathanael, as the only Evangelist who gives the account of this Apostle's first interview with Christ calls him. He received no direct reply to his question, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith to him, Behold an Israelite indeed,

Matt. xiii. 55.

² Mark vi. 3.

in whom is no guile ! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me ? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee."¹

Jewish writers tell us that devout persons frequently offered up their prayers under the shade of fig-trees. Probably Nathanael was so occupied when Philip found him, and took him to Jesus :—

“ In his own pleasant fig-tree’s shade,
Which by his household fountain grew,
Where, at noon-day, his prayer he made,
To know God better than he knew.”

Our Lord’s knowledge of his secret devotions, though at too great a distance to have seen him with his bodily eyes, convinced Nathanael that it was indeed the Messiah who stood before him ; and in an ecstasy he exclaimed, “ Rabbi, thou art the Son of God ; thou art the King of Israel.”² Our Saviour, pleased with his ready faith, said, “ Because I said unto thee I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou ? Thou shalt see greater things than these. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.”³ Greater things than Christ’s knowing he had been at prayer under the fig-tree should

¹ John i. 46-48.

² John i. 49.

³ John i. 50, 51.

Nathanael see in the miracles our Lord intended shortly to perform, and which would so convince him of the heavenly nature of Jesus, that he would in imagination, if not in reality, see angels descending upon our Saviour, and ascending again when their mission was accomplished. How greatly those holy beings rejoiced in the prospect of man's redemption, and, in an inferior sense, assisted in the mighty task, we have abundant proof. At the annunciation, at the birth, after the temptation in the wilderness, in Gethsemane, after the resurrection, and at the ascension, we find these holy messengers were employed, and in visible forms. Within three days after his introduction to Jesus, Nathanael witnessed the first public miracle our Saviour performed. "And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: and both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage."¹ The twelve were not all there, of course, several of them not having yet seen Jesus; but Nathanael is generally believed to have been one of the disciples invited to the marriage feast in Cana. Who the bridegroom was is not told us, but it is supposed by many to have been St John. Before the feast was over the wine was exhausted, and "the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman,

¹ John ii. 1, 2.

what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come."¹ We are so accustomed to think of Mary only as the meek and lowly Virgin,—first in humble faith receiving the heavenly message; then patiently enduring all the inconveniences of a stable when she most needed the comforts of her own home; then, under the guidance of Joseph, fleeing with the infant Jesus into a foreign country to avoid the cruelty of a tyrant; then, a few years afterwards, searching with sorrow-stricken face for her lost child; and lastly, as a desolate widow, gazing upon her crucified son,—that we can scarcely imagine her one of a joyous wedding party; but it is no less true that she was one of the guests at the marriage of Cana, and not merely tolerating the festive scene out of courtesy to the bride and bridegroom, but taking an active part in the entertainment. She enters into the feelings of the host when the wine is exhausted, and appeals to Jesus to help him in his difficulty. Why did Mary tell her son, possibly in a whisper, that there was no wine? Why did she not tell Nathanael, who would know better in his own city from whence more could be procured? Surely Mary must have witnessed some of the miraculous powers of Jesus in her humble home at Nazareth, and now hoped he would, by the same divine power, relieve the bride-

¹ John ii. 3, 4.

groom from his awkward position. There is something in the answer of Jesus to Mary that appears to us rather harsh ; but he meant no disrespect ; he only wished her to understand that, as he had now entered upon his public ministry, he could no longer be subject to her. The word woman was in those days used to females of the highest rank, and our Lord, when displaying his deep affection for her in his last fearful agonies, addressed his mother as woman. "Woman, behold thy son!"¹ Mary appears not to have been discouraged by the reply she received from Jesus, but privately said to the servants, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it."² "And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews."³ The vessels were placed for the guests to wash their hands in before sitting down to the feast, as it was contrary to their custom to sit down to meat with unwashen hands. Jesus told the servants to fill the waterpots with water. "And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast."⁴ The water was, you are aware, turned into wine. This miracle, no doubt, confirmed the faith of Nathanael and the other followers of Jesus, for it is said, "This beginning of

¹ John xix. 26.² John ii. 5.³ John ii. 6.⁴ John ii. 7, 8.

miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory ; and his disciples believed on him.”¹ Among the ruins of Cana may still be seen large stone pots of the same description as those used in our Saviour’s time for purification. We hear nothing more of Nathanael till we find him, under the name of Bartholemew, ranked among the Apostles, when he not only saw, but, in the name of Jesus, did many mighty works. Devils trembled at his voice, and dared not disobey him. Disease vanished at his touch, and the soul returned to the stiffened corpse when he commanded it. His life, from this time till the ascension of our Lord, was one continued scene of self-denial and danger. His Master was “despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.”² And Bartholomew, his faithful follower and servant, endured the same indignities and trials. Twice he escaped shipwreck, only by a miracle each time. Often doubtless, like his Lord, he had nowhere to lay his head. From city to city he accompanied Jesus, and shared with him the hatred and contempt of his wretched countrymen. He was one of the little band who took refuge in Bethabara when the Jews sought to kill Jesus ; and he, with the rest, tried to persuade our Saviour not to go to Bethany when

John ii. 11.

² Isa. liii. 3.

Lazarus was sick. He was at the last supper, and heard the astounding words, "One of you shall betray me;"¹ and, like the others, said, "Is it I?"² and shortly afterwards joined in the last hymn he sang on earth with "the Lamb of God:"³ that night he fled from Gethsemane, and unless he were one of those acquaintances who stood afar off beholding the crucifixion of our Lord, the earthquake, the darkened sun, and the rising of the dead from their graves, we know nothing more of him till we find him and the other disciples, "for fear of the Jews,"⁴ shut up in a room, when their risen Lord appeared in the midst of them. He, with the rest, was terrified, for they thought they saw a spirit; but Jesus "upbraided them with their unbelief,"⁵ and "showed them his hands and his feet."⁶ Eight days afterwards our Saviour again appeared to the disciples in Jerusalem. The doors of the room in which they were assembled were closed, and we are led to believe securely fastened, yet Jesus suddenly stood in the midst of them, and said, "Peace be unto you."⁷ Shortly afterwards we find Nathanael, with some of the other disciples, once more on the hallowed Lake of Galilee. "There were together

¹ John xiii. 21.² Mark xiv. 19.³ John i. 29.⁴ John xx. 19.⁵ Mark xvi. 14.⁶ Luke xxiv. 40.⁷ John xx. 26.

Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples. Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.”¹ In the morning Jesus stood upon the shore, but they did not know him until he had performed a miracle. For forty days the Apostles saw Jesus at various times after he had risen from the dead, and then he ascended into heaven. I can tell you very little more of Nathanael, or, as I shall for the future call him, Bartholomew, as I believe his name only once occurs in the Acts of the Apostles, and that is when he is mentioned in the list given of those who, according to the command of Jesus, remained in Jerusalem till the descent of the Holy Ghost upon them. A few pages back I remarked that, from the time of his call till the ascension of our blessed Lord, Bartholomew's life was one continued scene of self-denial and danger, but no one can be in the least acquainted with the history of the early Church and suppose that his labours or his troubles ceased till he had laid down a life devoted to the spread of the Gospel. Socrates of Constantinople, in his “History of the Church,” says, that he

¹ John xxi. 2, 3.

worked among the most cruel and barbarous heathens on the borders of Africa, near Abyssinia, then called Ethiopia ; and Eusebius tells us that more than a hundred years afterwards a great philosopher and Christian, named Pantænus, became a missionary, and in his journeyings arrived at the scene of Bartholomew's labours, and there found a copy of the Gospel according to St Matthew, which, according to tradition, St Bartholomew had left behind him. Has ever traveller since found on the shores of the Red Sea such a peerless gem as that manuscript, carrying as it did the tidings of salvation to millions of immortal creatures? After Bartholomew had been some time in this part, it appears from the history that he removed further north ; and now it was that at Hierapolis he worked with Philip. You will remember that the Phrygians were perfectly blinded with idolatry, but the devoted and zealous Apostles succeeded in convincing many of their errors, which so enraged the magistrates that they seized upon Philip and Bartholomew, and crucified them. The life of the latter, however, was saved in consequence of the people being made sensible by the earthquake that God's vengeance was upon them. He was taken down from the cross alive, his heavenly Father having more work for him to do ; but Philip's labours were ended, and he

rested in the Lord. How Bartholomew assisted Philip's sister, Mariamne, to bury the martyr, I have already told you. After making one more effort to convert the inhabitants of Hierapolis, they left the city. What afterwards became of his interesting companion I know not ; but probably she is among the noble army of martyrs near the throne of her Saviour in her robes of spotless white. From Hierapolis Bartholomew removed a little further to the east, and went into Lycaonia, where Chrysostom assures us he established the Christian religion ; and, having crossed Cappadocia, he finally reached Armenia, and there, according to Sophronius, his labours ceased. While preaching to the inhabitants of a city, called Albanople, he was seized by the governor, a miserable idolater, who treated his victim with the greatest cruelty. Grievous it is to have to relate how this holy and good man, whom you cannot have read about without loving and admiring, was first beaten to the ground with staves, then, as Hippolytus, a Greek father and martyr of the third century, tells us, crucified with his head downwards ; then, as others say, taken from the cross alive and flayed, and afterwards beheaded. What monsters to have dreamed of such cruelties ! But their power was limited. They could not shut out from the martyr's dying gaze that glorious home

they were hurrying him to, the prospect of which made him endure cheerfully all the tortures inflicted upon him.

The burial-place of this Apostle is uncertain. It is supposed by some to have been at Rome, but this is very improbable.

The name of Bartholomew sadly reminds us of one of the most terrible massacres we read of in history, that known as "The Bartholomew," because the bloody work began on the festival of that saint. The cruel Catherine de Medicis, for some time Queen Regent of France, and mother of Charles IX., was a bitter enemy to the Protestants, or, as they were called, Huguenots. The burning of Protestants had formed part of the festivities of her coronation, and from that time till her death, which occurred forty years afterwards, she never ceased plotting their destruction ; but it was the fearful tragedy that commenced on the 24th of August 1572, which has rendered her name infamous throughout all ages.

It would be out of place here to enter into a minute account of the massacre of St Bartholomew ; suffice it to say, that the wicked queen-mother, aided by one or two others, laid all her plans with the greatest secrecy. In order to allure as many Huguenots as possible to Paris, she pretended to favour them, and many of the highest

quality were invited to the Court. On the day before the massacre, a number of the citizens were ordered to appear in the king's presence, and were told that when certain signals were given they were to slay as many of the Huguenots as they could ; and if they refused to do so, they would be hanged. At midnight the awful signals were given : bells were rung, torches were put into the windows, and chains placed across the streets, and the bloody work began. The murderers spared neither age nor sex. Many were slain in their beds, and the headless bodies were thrown through the windows. The badge worn by the inhuman monsters engaged in this tragedy was a white cross in their hats ; and they were encouraged by the priests, who each held a sword in one hand, and a crucifix in the other. Surely the angels must have wept to have seen the sacred emblem of our salvation thus polluted. The massacre lasted a week. Seventy thousand fell victims to the fury of the ambitious and cruel Catherine de Medicis. Many visitors at the palace were slain ; and one goldsmith boasted of having killed four hundred persons with his own hands. Though Catherine de Medicis was the prime mover of this fearful massacre, the heads of the Church in Rome must have been privy to it, for the news of its accomplishment was eagerly expected in the papal city, and when it arrived


was received with acclamations, and the firing of cannon announced to the neighbouring villages that the bloody work had been done in Paris. The Pope went to church in procession, performed high mass with all the splendour of his court, and ordered a *Te Deum* to be sung in celebration of the event. By his order, a picture of the slaughter was painted, and still hangs on the walls of the papal palace. A medal was also struck in commemoration of the event, the one side of it presenting the head of the Pope, and the other, the exterminating angel, with the sword and the cross, destroying the Protestants, and having this inscription in Latin, "Slaughter of the Huguenots, 1572." This medal was not many years ago re-cast in Rome, a proof that the Romish Church is as little changed in her persecuting spirit, as in other features which constitute her the "mystery of iniquity."¹ Should we not be thankful that we live in a land of religious toleration, where every one can worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience; and that we can each sit under our own vine and fig-tree, no one daring to make us afraid?

¹ 2 Thess. ii. 7.

SAINT THOMAS.

COLLECT FOR SAINT THOMAS THE APOSTLE'S DAY.

ALMIGHTY and everliving God, who, for the more confirmation of the faith, didst suffer thy holy Apostle Thomas to be doubtful in thy Son's resurrection: Grant us so perfectly, and without all doubt, to believe in thy Son Jesus Christ, that our faith in thy sight may never be reproved. Hear us, O Lord, through the same Jesus Christ, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, now and for evermore. Amen.

HE more we study the lives of the Apostles, the greater must be our regret that so little is known in reference to their youthful days. Such noble, self-denying, and brave men must in their boyhood have given many instances of the courage, love, and devotion for which they were afterwards so eminently distinguished. It is true that the grace of God powerfully influenced them after "they had been with Jesus,"¹ But can we imagine Peter as a youth being anything but warm-hearted, energetic, and generous, as ready to plunge into the Sea of

¹ Acts iv. 13.

Galilee to save the life of a companion, as he was when a man to leap from his boat and wade through its waters to his dear Lord? And how many affecting stories might not the mother of John have told of the gentleness, goodness, and filial love of her child! But there were no printed books in those days; and though there might be a few biographers, they would only think of writing the life of a Herod, a Pilate, or a Caiaphas. Poor fishermen, however exalted their virtues, would be quite beneath their notice.

We are told the birthplace of many of the Apostles, but as to what city Thomas was a native of, or who his father was, we are left in total ignorance. It is supposed that St Thomas was a Galilean, and that his parents were very poor indeed; but, being pious, they carefully instructed him in the knowledge of the holy writings. It is thought that his father was a fisherman, and that he himself was brought up to the same occupation. The Evangelists do not mention him till they give the list of the Apostles, and then always couple him with St Matthew. At the command of Jesus, Thomas went forth to preach to men that they should repent, to cast out devils, and to anoint with oil those that were sick, and heal them. But, from the time of his ordination to the Apostleship, he is not individually mentioned in the Scriptures

until he was at Bethabara with Jesus shortly before the crucifixion. A touching instance is then given of his willingness to die with his dear Master. Our Lord had, with his disciples, gone up to Jerusalem. He had, by his preaching, offended his unbelieving countrymen, who three times attempted to stone him ; but "his hour was not yet come,"¹ and he escaped out of their hands, and went to Bethabara, beyond Jordan, where John had baptized. While he was there with the Apostles, he received a message from the sisters of Bethany, telling him that their brother Lazarus was sick. "Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus,"² but he did not at once hasten to the bedside of his friend ; not because he was afraid of the Jews, (Bethany being only two miles from Jerusalem,) nor because he was indifferent, but "that the Son of God might be glorified."³ He might have transported himself instantly to Bethany, and raised Lazarus at once from his sick couch, or even have given the word at Bethabara, and the disease would have vanished ; but the hardened Jews might have said that the complaint had suddenly taken a favourable turn : and so our Saviour waited till Lazarus was dead. Can we not imagine the state of painful suspense the sisters were kept in ? Jesus had

¹ John vii. 30.² John xi. 5.³ John xi. 4.

received their affecting message, "Lord, behold he whom thou lovest is sick."¹ They did not ask him to come, for they felt sure that, if he knew they were in trouble, he would hasten to their assistance. His reply, "This sickness is not unto death,"² would, for a time, assure them. But the disease gained strength, the pulse became weaker, and symptoms of death appeared. Oh, how often would Martha leave her dying brother, and with eager gaze look in the direction from whence Jesus should come ! but still there were no signs of the Great Physician. The death dew stood on the forehead of the loved one, and Mary, in an agony of grief, would pray—oh, how fervently !—for Jesus not to tarry ; but there was no sound of his coming. At length the parting kiss was given, the eyes were closed, the heart ceased to beat, and the bereaved sisters sat down to weep beside the corpse of their brother. Jesus knew all that was passing in that house of mourning ; he heard the prayers and sighs of Martha and Mary, and saw the soul of Lazarus departing ; but, notwithstanding, he remained at Bethabara. At length he said to his disciples, "Let us go into Judæa again. His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee ; and goest thou thither again ? Jesus answered, Are there not

¹ John xi. 3.² John xi. 4.

twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. 'But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.'¹ Jesus meant them to understand that, until the time had arrived for him to "make his soul an offering for sin,"² the Jews had no power to take him. Afterwards, he said, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go that I may awake him out of sleep. Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well."³ Thus did the disciples try to persuade Jesus not to go, fearing that they would fall into the hands of the Jews if they ventured near to Jerusalem. "Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead, and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless, let us go unto him. Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow-disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him"⁴—that is, with Jesus. The courage of Thomas inspired the rest of the Apostles, and the devoted party left Bethabara, but did not reach Bethany till Lazarus had been in the grave four days. Bethany was only six miles from Bethabara. Why did Jesus linger on the way? "That the Son of God might be glorified."⁵ If he raised

¹ John xi. 7-10.² Isa. liii. 10.³ John xi. 11, 12.⁴ John xi. 14 16.⁵ John xi. 4.

Lazarus immediately after his death, the Jews might have said that Lazarus had only been in a trance, so he waited till corruption had begun its work. In the meantime, we can imagine that so long as their brother's corpse remained in the house, all hope would not be extinguished in the bosoms of the sisters. Doubtless, they had heard how Jesus had restored to life Jairus's daughter, and the widow's son; and could he not, if he were there, give them their brother back again? But hour after hour passed, and he came not. One day only was the corpse suffered to remain in the house, then was it carried to the tomb. And now the sisters believed that they were indeed parted for ever from Lazarus on this side of the grave. This amiable family had many friends who came from Jerusalem "to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother."¹ Four days of mourning passed away, and then a group of travellers approached the city, and soon the news spread that Jesus was coming. The sisters heard of it, but only Martha went to meet him. With a bright, joyous face had she formerly welcomed him to Bethany; but now, in heart-broken accents, she salutes him with the lamentation, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died."² And then, as if hope were not quite abandoned, she

¹ John xi. 19.² John xi. 21.

continued, "But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world."¹ After this full and complete confession of her faith, "she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee. As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him."² What new hopes fluttered in the breasts of the sisters as they hurried to Jesus! Martha had told Mary, *secretly*, that Jesus had come. She knew how much reason she had to dread the Jews, knowing that he was so near. But the mourners, whom Mary had left in the house, supposing that she had gone to the grave to weep there, followed her. When Mary had reached the place where Jesus was, she fell at his feet, and, like her sister, exclaimed, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

¹ John xi. 22-27.² John xi. 28, 29.

When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, and said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!"¹

Jesus wept: the sisters wept: and the Jews wept. Were the Apostles, do you imagine, unmoved spectators of so much sorrow? Thomas had proved his love to Jesus by coming, as he supposed, to die with him. Would he not weep with Jesus? Peter was ready to lay down his life for his dear Lord's sake: would he not weep with Jesus? And the best beloved disciple, would he not weep when Jesus wept? And Bartholomew and Philip, and the rest, all but the hypocritical Judas, how would their hearts melt within them! They moved to the grave. It was cut in the rock, and a stone was placed at the entrance. Jesus gave orders for the stone to be removed. This was done, and at once revealed the corpse, closely wrapped in linen bandages, the legs bound together, and the arms bound to the sides. "And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe

¹ John xi. 32-36.

that thou hast sent me. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes."¹ What must have been the feelings of those who, after hearing the command of Jesus, saw the body immediately begin to move, then leave the tomb and stand before them? We can readily suppose how they gazed in silent amazement upon the spectral figure till the voice of Jesus, directing them to "loose him and let him go,"² aroused them. Vain would it be to attempt to describe the gratitude of the sisters, the reverential awe of the disciples, and the wonder of the Jews, when, upon the removal of the napkin which covered the face, they beheld the features of Lazarus, not a mass of corruption, but glowing with health and beaming with intelligence.

All the party, we know, did not accompany Lazarus to his home; but we can readily suppose that Jesus and his disciples became his guests. How would the sisters, on arriving at the house, with trembling joy, bring out the garments of their brother, which they had carefully put away, to be kept as precious relics; and then, after hastily removing all signs of mourning from the dwelling, prepare a feast suitable to the solemn though joyous occasion.

¹ John xi. 41-44.

² John xi. 44.

St John is the only Evangelist who gives an account of this deeply-interesting event. The reason why Matthew, Mark, and Luke were silent on the subject probably was that, when they wrote their Gospels, Lazarus (who, we are told by early writers, lived thirty years after he was raised from the dead) was alive, and would, if they had recorded the miracle, have been exposed to danger through the malice and hatred of the Jews. But, when St John wrote his Gospel, Lazarus was again laid in the tomb, there to rest till he shall a second time hear the voice of the Son of God, and come forth.

Thomas was, as you will have observed, also called Didymus, each name signifying "a twin," or "one of twins." In Hebrew he would be addressed as Thomas, but in Greek as Didymus.

When Jesus was comforting his poor disciples, just after telling them that he must leave them, he said, "Let not your heart be troubled : ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions : if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself ; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas

saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest ; and how can we know the way ? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life : no man cometh unto the Father but by me."¹ Thomas was still thinking of an earthly kingdom, and an earthly palace, and wished to know the way that led to them ; but Jesus explained to him that he was the way, and it was only through him that they could reach their home—a heavenly one.

After this, we do not hear of Thomas by name till the evening of the day Christ rose from the dead. "Then, the same day, at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he showed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord."² Thomas was not with them. What occasioned his absence we know not. Perhaps since that night, when, like scattered sheep, the disciples fled from Gethsemane, he had not been seen by any of his companions, so knew not of their arrangement to meet together ; or perhaps, though aware of their design, fear of the Jews. prevented him, even at night, leaving his

¹ John xiv. 1-6.² John xx. 19, 20.

hiding-place. We are simply told that "Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came."¹ It would seem, however, that but little time was lost before he was informed that the Lord had appeared to the Apostles. But he would not believe. "Except," said he, "I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe."² Strange indeed was his incredulity. Had not Jesus himself said to his disciples, as they were going up to Jerusalem, that he would rise from the dead "the third day?"³ And could he, after the wonderful miracles he had seen performed, imagine anything impossible with Christ? And, moreover, he had the declaration of *ten* men who had, for more than two years, been the constant companions of Jesus, that they had seen him, and he had showed them his hands and his side. So deeply rooted was his unbelief, that, for eight days, he obstinately rejected the proof of Christ's resurrection, during which time he must probably have heard, over and over again, how Jesus had appeared to Mary Magdalene, then to the women who had been at the sepulchre, then to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus, and that Peter when alone had seen him. How fatal this hard-

¹ John xx. 24.² John xx. 25.³ Mark x. 34.

ness of belief would have been to Thomas if the compassionate Jesus had not condescended to prove to him, by his own senses, that he had indeed risen from the dead !

“ And after eight days, again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them : then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands ; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side : and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed : blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.”¹ No sooner was Thomas convinced than his unbelief was changed into rapture ; and he confessed that it was not only his Lord and Master who stood before him, but his God.

Not much more can be gathered of the life of the Apostle St Thomas from the Holy Scriptures. He was one of the party on the Lake of Galilee when Jesus stood on the shore, after his resurrection, and who, when they reached the shore, dined with our Saviour. We may suppose that Jesus chose a secluded spot for this repast, but a stray pedestrian may, perchance, while strolling

¹ John xx. 26-29.

along the shore, have passed them; and if so how little would the stranger imagine, as he looked at the group of fishermen, the coal fire, the broiled fish, and the bread, that he who presided over that humble feast was "The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace,"¹ and the Saviour of the World.

After the ascension we find Thomas, with others, in a large upper room in Jerusalem, where they "continued with one accord in prayer and supplication,"² and from that time he is not spoken of by name in the Bible. Thomas laboured at first in Judæa, and afterwards, Origen tells us, he travelled into Parthia. He subsequently, Sophronius and others inform us, preached to the Medes and Persians, and other nations. After many journeys, it appears that he reached India. Nicephorus says that at first he was afraid to venture among these dark-coloured and cruel heathens, but he was encouraged by a vision that God would be with him and help him, so he not only entered India, but journeyed far into the country. He was, through the divine blessing upon his ministry, most successful in bringing the people out of the grossest darkness into the clear light of the gospel, winning them by his gentleness, patience, and persuasive powers to the obedience of Christ. It

¹ Isaiah ix. 6.

² Acts i. 14.

was at a city called Malipur, in India, that he began to erect a place for divine worship, when he was forbidden to complete the building by the priests, and Segamo, prince of the country. But, after performing several miracles, the work was suffered to proceed, and Segamo himself became a Christian. The idolatrous priests now began to see that their calling was in danger; so they resolved to put Thomas to death, vainly imagining that, if the leader were destroyed, the new religion would soon die away. Not long had the murderers to wait before an opportunity occurred for them to carry out their wicked design. Outside the gates of Malipur was a tomb: who was buried there I know not, but one would suppose some dear friend of the Apostle, for to this tomb Thomas was in the habit of retiring, and, probably because it was a quiet and secluded spot, he there held communion with his God. It was while engaged in prayer in his favourite retreat, that the Brahmins and their armed followers attacked him. They shot him with their arrows, stoned him, and at length one of the priests ran him through with a lance. His disciples carried the body to the church St Thomas had a little time before completed, and there in great grief interred the holy martyr. The sacred building was afterwards improved, till it became

a church of great magnificence. The Christians of the East say, and believe, that the body of St Thomas was, with great care dug up by Don Emanuel Frea, governor of the Coast of Coromandel ; and it was discovered that Prince Segamo, whom St Thomas had been the means of converting, had been buried in the same grave.

In the sixteenth century, Don Alfonso De Souza was viceroy in India, under John the Third, king of Portugal, and resided near the scene of St Thomas's death. The Portuguese say that some brass tablets were brought to him, with inscriptions on them, so ancient that they could scarcely be read. A Jewish antiquarian at length discovered that they contained a donation from the king to St Thomas of a piece of ground to build a church upon. It is said there was also a cross found bearing an inscription, which was interpreted by a learned Brahmin. It gave an account of St Thomas's ministry in those parts, and his death, and stated that that cross had been kept as a memorial of the martyred Apostle, it being stained with his blood.

When the Portuguese first arrived in India, more than three hundred years ago, they found great numbers of Christians, called St Thomas's Christians : no less, some say, than fifteen or sixteen thousand families, successors of the dis-

ciples of St Thomas. They had churches, were very poor, were governed by patriarchs and bishops, received the two sacraments, and observed many of the seasons of the Church.

The date of St Thomas's death is not known. St Chrysostom says that this Saint, who was at first the weakest and most incredulous of all the Apostles, became, through Christ's condescending to satisfy his scruples, and the power of the divine grace, the most active and invincible of them all.

SAINT MATTHEW.

COLLECT FOR SAINT MATTHEW THE APOSTLE'S DAY.

O ALMIGHTY GOD, who, by thy blessed Son, didst call Matthew from the receipt of custom to be an Apostle and Evangelist ; Grant us grace to forsake all covetous desires, and inordinate love of riches, and to follow the same thy Son Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.



SOLEMN indeed must be the thoughts of the traveller as he strolls on the shores of Galilee. Perfect stillness pervades the scene. Not even a ripple on the beautiful lake disturbs the silence around him. Not a single boat gliding across the sea varies the picture. In solitude he may stand and contemplate the mountains that afforded a retreat to the blessed Jesus from the noisy throng, and the waters that were ever ready to obey the voice of their divine Master. But how different must it have been when our Saviour walked by the sea-side, and multitudes followed him ! Look at an ancient map of Palestine, and you will see how

many flourishing cities raised their proud heads on the banks of Gennesaret. What a busy scene the lake must have then presented ! Vessels of every description were sailing from one side to the other. Boats for passengers, and ships for merchandise ; fishermen's boats, and doubtless often boats full of pleasure-seekers from Capernaum, Bethsaida, Tiberias, and other places.

No wonder that the publican, or tax-gatherer, who had the good fortune, speaking in a worldly sense, to be stationed on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, carried on a flourishing trade. It is the history of one of these Roman servants you are about to read. But, first, I must explain what a publican was. He was a collector of the customs, or tribute, from the Jews and others for the Romans, under whose yoke the Jews then were, and had been for sixty years before the birth of Christ. These collectors were called in Latin *publicani*, (*publicans*,) because they gathered public payments. The taxes were looked upon by the Jews, especially the Galileans, as a great grievance. Not only the loss of the money was a consideration, but the impost itself constantly reminded them that they were not free. The Roman publicans, knowing that Jews would better understand the habits of their own people, often employed them as deputies. These deputy

publicans were held in great detestation and contempt, for they not only collected what was required by the Romans, but seized every opportunity of extorting money for themselves. Another reason why the Jews despised them was, because they had, in the way of business, to mix with the Gentiles, a Jew thinking it a disgrace to deal with, or even speak to, a Gentile. So much were the Jewish publicans abhorred by their countrymen, that it was considered unlawful for any one to do them an act of kindness, to sit at meat, or to travel with them. A Jew might even cheat a publican without being punished for it, and was not allowed to hold any communion with him in matters of religion. In short, a publican was shunned, detested, and feared. Jesus, in giving directions to his disciples, told them that if a brother trespassed against one of them, he was to reprove him privately ; but if that had no effect, he must do so before witnesses ; and if the offender still continued hardened, the injured man must, said our Saviour, "tell it unto the church ; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a *publican*."¹ It was a common proverb among the Rabbins, "Take not a wife out of that family wherein there is a publican, for such are all publicans," or vile persons. Although the Roman

¹ Matt. xviii. 17.

publicans were generally people of consequence, they had no reputation for honesty. So confirmed was their character for fraud and extortion, that when one of them, Sabinus, the father of the Emperor Vespasian, proved an exception to the rule, there were certain statues erected to his memory with this inscription, "For the faithful publican." And, therefore, no wonder, if, in the Gospel, publicans and sinners go hand in hand.

Matthew, the Apostle and Evangelist, was a publican. He recorded the fact, that the power of religion might be made known. Read his own words, "And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom : and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him."¹ What astonishment must this event have caused in the minds of those who were standing by ! Can we imagine the scene ? In a counting-house on the shore, near Capernaum, sat Matthew, busy collecting the taxes due upon merchandise and passengers about to be taken across the lake. Probably he appeared wholly absorbed in his profitable business, and heedless alike of the scorn and hatred of his fellow-countrymen, and any reproaches of his own conscience, as he extorted

¹ Matt. ix. 9.

money both for his masters and for himself. But who can tell what was passing through his mind? Perhaps, as he sat there, he was reflecting upon the wonderful things that were happening at Capernaum, and possibly he had listened to our Lord's discourses, and his heart had been touched with love for, and admiration of the divine Teacher. We know, however, no more than the Jews who unwillingly paid him the tribute money, and saw in Matthew only a vile tax-gatherer. A man in humble garb approached the spot. He looked upon Matthew, and simply said, "Follow me."¹

"At once he rose, and left his gold,
His treasure and his heart
Transferr'd, where he shall safe behold
Earth and her idols part."

What marvellous power had that meek stranger exercised? would the wondering Jews ask, as they looked upon the vacant seat and the neglected heaps of money. They did not reflect that he who could heal the sick, and raise the dead, could, with a word or look, give spiritual life to a heart dead to all but worldly gain. With a cheerful and willing spirit did Matthew sacrifice all for Christ. So overflowing with thankfulness was he at having found the Saviour, that he made a great feast in his own house, inviting his friends to meet Jesus

¹ Luke v. 27.

and his disciples, and to rejoice with him. Jesus became the guest of Matthew, and sat down with publicans and sinners. You would have supposed that all must have admired the condescension and humility of our Lord, but the haughty Pharisees found fault with him. They insolently asked his disciples why he associated with publicans and sinners. Our Saviour heard them, and at once answered, "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."¹ No one blames a physician for the company he is with when his patients compose it, so, as Jesus came to heal those who were afflicted with the disease of sin, and the Pharisees considered themselves righteous, they ought not to have been surprised at finding sinners rather than themselves the Saviour's companions.

The following year Matthew was ordained an Apostle, from which time no special mention is made of him in Scripture. He, like the rest of the holy band, preached the gospel, healed the sick, cast out devils, and took part in, or witnessed, the interesting scenes of our Lord's life, the last of which was that which took place on Olivet, when Jesus, while blessing the Apostles, ascended into heaven.

¹ Luke v. 31, 32.

Matthew was also called Levi. It is not known precisely where he was born, but he was believed to have been a native of Galilee. His father's name was Alphæus, and some have supposed that he also was a publican. The father of Matthew must not be confounded with Alphæus, the father of St James the Less. After our Lord's ascension, Matthew preached up and down Judæa for eight years or more, and then laboured in converting the Gentiles. He wrote his Gospel (the first that was penned) chiefly for his Jewish brethren. In it he proves that Jesus was the promised Messiah. Knowing the faith of his countrymen in the Old Testament Scriptures, he begins his Gospel by pointing out that Jesus of Nazareth was directly descended from Jesse, from whom was to spring the Messiah. (Read the eleventh chapter of Isaiah.) He shows, in many instances, that the events related in his Gospel were the fulfilment of prophecies the Jews acknowledged to be true. When speaking of the birth of Jesus, he reminded them of the prophecy of Isaiah, "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."¹ He told them that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, and that the chief priests and scribes said that Christ must be born

¹ Matt. i. 23.

there, for the prophet Micah had written, "And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda : for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel."¹ John the Baptist, who, in the wilderness, proclaimed to the Jews that the Messiah was at hand, was, Matthew said, the same spoken of by the Prophet Esaias, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."² Jesus, he wrote, "came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim : that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the Prophet, saying, The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles ; the people which sat in darkness saw a great light ; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up."³ When he recounted the miracles of Jesus, how he healed the sick and cast out devils, he reminded his countrymen of the prophecy of Esaias, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."⁴ The method of teaching adopted by our Lord was, he wrote, a fulfilment of prophecy. "All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables ; and without

¹ Matt. ii. 6.² Matt. iii. 3.³ Matt. iv. 13-16.⁴ Matt. viii. 17.

a parable spake he not unto them : that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables ; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.”¹ Jesus entered Jerusalem upon an ass. St Matthew reminded the Jews of what Zechariah had prophesied. “Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.”² Thus this Evangelist lost no opportunity of pointing out the fulfilment of prophecy in the life and ministry of Jesus. And what believer in the Old Testament could, after reading St Matthew’s history of our Saviour, doubt that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed the Christ ?

It is only in St Matthew’s Gospel that you will find an account of the adoration of the magi, the flight into Egypt, the massacre of the innocents, the parable of the ten virgins, the dream of Pilate’s wife, the resurrection of many saints at our Saviour’s crucifixion, and the bribing of the soldiers by the chief priests after our Lord had risen from the dead.

Of the mode of St Matthew’s death, nothing certain is known ; but it is supposed that he was slain with a halberd at Naddaber, in Ethiopia, where he had, by his preaching and miracles, been the means

¹ Matt. xiii. 34, 35.

² Matt. xxi. 5.

of converting multitudes. He was noted for his humility, and Clemens Alexandrinus says for his temperance and abstemiousness also.

St Matthew is generally coupled with St Thomas. St Mark and St Luke, in giving the list of the Apostles, place the former before the latter ; but Matthew, with his wonted humility, places himself last.

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Y no means the least important of the
 Apostles was James the Less, who was
 also called James the Just. He was con-
 sidered a model of virtue; and Josephus,
 the Jewish historian, speaks of him as a
 "wonderful person, celebrated of all others for
 righteousness." It is not known what place he
 belonged to, excepting that in the Talmud it is
 said James was a native of Sechania. No trace,
 however, of even the site of a town of that name
 can be discovered, so you must be content with
 simply knowing that he dwelt in Palestine. It is
 needless to surmise in what part of the Holy Land
 the deeply-interesting family of which James was

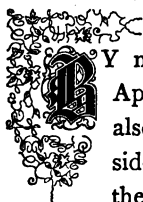
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St James lived before Christ began his ministry.
He and his cousin, the blessed Jesus, might have
been companions from their infancy, or they might
only have seen each other when they and their
parents met at the annual feasts in Jerusalem.
James the Less was one of the four sons of
Alphæus or Cleophas and Mary. His brothers—
Jones or Joseph, Simon or Simeon, and Jude or
Judas (the last an Apostle)—are all mentioned
in the Gospels, and are spoken of as our Lord's
brethren. The word "brethren" in the New Testa-
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No record is left of St James's call to the dis-
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Saviour to be his companions and attendants, he
filled a higher position on earth than ever monarch
has yet attained to. The Lord of all gave him

SAINT JAMES THE LESS.

COLLECT FOR SAINT PHILIP AND SAINT JAMES'S DAY.

O ALMIGHTY GOD, whom truly to know is everlasting life ; Grant us perfectly to know thy Son, Jesus Christ, to be the way, the truth, and the life ; that, following the steps of thy holy Apostles, Saint Philip and Saint James, we may steadfastly walk in the way that leadeth to eternal life ; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.



Y no means the least important of the Apostles was James the Less, who was also called James the Just. He was considered a model of virtue ; and Josephus, the Jewish historian, speaks of him as a "wonderful person, celebrated of all others for righteousness." It is not known what place he belonged to, excepting that in the Talmud it is said James was a native of Sechania. No trace, however, of even the site of a town of that name can be discovered, so you must be content with simply knowing that he dwelt in Palestine. It is needless to surmise in what part of the Holy Land the deeply-interesting family of which James was

a member resided. His mother was sister to the Virgin Mary, so her home, before her marriage, must have been at Sepphoris, a large city near Nazareth, as Anne and Joachim, the supposed parents of the Virgin, are said, by early writers, to have resided there. But this does not tell us where St James lived before Christ began his ministry. He and his cousin, the blessed Jesus, might have been companions from their infancy, or they might only have seen each other when they and their parents met at the annual feasts in Jerusalem. James the Less was one of the four sons of Alphæus or Cleophas and Mary. His brothers—Joses or Joseph, Simon or Simeon, and Jude or Judas (the last an Apostle)—are all mentioned in the Gospels, and are spoken of as our Lord's brethren. The word "brethren" in the New Testament must not always be understood as meaning sons of the same parents, as it is sometimes used when a remoter relationship is intended.

No record is left of St James's 'call to the discipleship, and his name does not occur in the Holy Writings till he was ordained an Apostle. We do not read of any individual act of his in the Gospels, but as one of the twelve selected by our Saviour to be his companions and attendants, he filled a higher position on earth than ever monarch has yet attained to. The Lord of all gave him

his commission, and, as a soldier of the cross, he fought bravely against the foes of Christ, and came off more than conqueror through him who loved him.

The Saviour, after his resurrection, honoured James with a special interview; but what passed on that occasion, or even where the meeting took place, we are not told in the Bible. Not one of the Evangelists speaks of the event, but St Paul tells us that Jesus "was seen of James; then of all the Apostles."¹ There was, so early as the first century, a sect of Judaizing Christians, (afterwards called Nazarénes,) who used the Gospel of St Matthew in Hebrew, but added much to it that cannot be considered of undoubted authority. The account they give of the interview between our Lord and James, and the circumstance which led to it, is, according to Jerome, that the latter took a solemn oath that, from the time he had drunk the wine the Saviour had given him when he instituted the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, he would eat bread no more till he had seen Jesus risen from the dead; and that after his resurrection Jesus appeared to James, and set bread before him, and, having blessed it, he brake it, and gave it to the Apostle, saying, "Eat thy bread, my brother, for the Son of man is truly risen from among them that sleep."

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 7.

After the ascension of our Lord, James took a very distinguished part in the acts of the Apostles, and was, on account of his exalted character, regarded as a person of the greatest importance in the early Christian Church. He was made Bishop of Jerusalem. Jesus, it is supposed, left behind him an intimation that he wished James to be appointed to this honourable post.

When Peter had been admitted into the house of Mary the mother of Mark, after his delivery out of prison by the angel, he gave his friends an account of his miraculous escape, and then said, "Go, show these things unto James and the brethren;"¹ meaning the whole Church, and particularly James, the bishop of it.

We have brought forcibly to our minds, in the case of the disputation touching circumcision, the very high position James filled, and the deference which was paid thereto. While Paul and Barnabas were at Antioch, "certain men which came down from Judæa taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved."² The Apostle and his companion, after a lengthy discussion with these Christians who wished to unite the ceremonial law with faith in Christ, resolved to go up to Jerusalem to consult the Apostles and elders

¹ Acts xii. 17.

² Acts xv. 1.

about the question. This they did, (St Paul tells us that he "went up by *revelation*,"¹) accompanied by Titus, and were received by "James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars"² of the church, to whom "they declared all things that God had done with them."³ A council was then held, in which there was much disputing. Peter addressed the assembly. Then Barnabas and Paul. Finally, James stood up. How many eager eyes would be fixed upon the venerable Apostle! How all present would bend forward to hear the decision of their bishop! James concurred in all that Peter, Paul, and Barnabas had said. His speech was as follows: "Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon" (Simon Peter) "hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. Wherefore my sentence is, that we

¹ Gal. ii. 2.² Gal. ii. 9.³ Acts xv. 4.

trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God : but that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath-day.”¹ No further discussion was necessary after James had given his sentence. Peter, John, Paul, Barnabas, and the rest regarded the point as settled. The fact of the Apostles deeming James’s sentence as final, is proof that Peter did not assume the position which the Romanists assign to him, that of head of the Church. “Then pleased it the Apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas ; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren : and they wrote letters by them after this manner ; The Apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia : Forasmuch as we have heard that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law : to whom we gave no such commandment : it seemed good unto us, being assembled with one

¹ Acts xv. 13-21.

accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things ; that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication : from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well." ¹

This decree of the council of Jerusalem set the question about circumcision completely at rest. No Gentile was required to be circumcised, nor was obedience to any part of the ceremonial law enforced upon them as necessary to salvation. There were, however, certain customs, in themselves indifferent, which few Jews, even after they had become Christians, could be induced to lay entirely aside. Of this nature was their dislike to eat any animal with the blood in it, or that had been strangled, or any meat which had been offered in sacrifice to idols. As regarded these things, the Gentile Christians had no such scruples. But the letter from the council advised that the Jewish prejudices in these matters should be considered, in order that the Jews might not, when they sat

¹ Acts xv. 22-29.

down to their meals, he shocked by seeing the Gentile converts pay no regard to so positive a command of Moses.

The letters were written, and every precaution, we may suppose, was taken to guard against any mischance that might happen to travellers passing through a country at that time infested by banditti, and overrun by a conquering enemy. But before the great Apostle and Barnabas took their departure from Jerusalem, can we not imagine them in company with Peter, John, and James, paying a hasty visit to places, oh, how dear to the devoted followers of Jesus—Gethsemane, Calvary, Olivet, Bethany, and many other spots would possess an irresistible charm to the enthusiastic Paul. But the zealous missionary, anxious to return to his great work, would not linger; and soon he and his three companions were far from the holy city, wending their perilous way to Antioch. Three hundred miles had they to travel. It is probable they took a direct route; and, if so, they would pass the lofty Gibeon, and perhaps gaze at the rock upon which, more than a thousand years before, had lain the bodies of the seven sons of Saul. Ere long they would reach Bethel; and perhaps, like the patriarch Jacob, would sleep there. In crossing Samaria, they possibly rested at the well where Jesus talked with the woman of

Samaria. When they arrived at Nain, they perhaps entered the city by the gate through which, twenty years before, the corpse of the widow's son was being carried when Jesus restored it to life. From the heights of Nazareth they may have gazed upon the lovely Lake of Galilee, whose clear waters, then sparkling in the distance, would soon be dyed with the blood of those who took no heed of the mighty works Jesus did. In time they would reach the foot of the snow-capped mountains of Lebanon : and now, through dreary wilds and over burning plains, the weary travellers directed their course to the Orontes. Oh, how welcome to them would be the sight of that beautiful river, with its wine-covered banks ! The rest of their journey would most likely be by water, and as the splendid city of Antioch, Queen of the East, burst upon their view, can we not imagine the delight of Silas and Judas. The stupendous walls, the gorgeous palaces, the head of Charon, the theatres, baths, colonnades, temples, and groves of laurels, myrtles, and cypresses, above which towered the rocky Mount Sylphius, were new to them. But Paul and Barnabas were not strangers to the beauties of Antioch, so one object alone would attract them—the church of the Christians. The news soon spread that the anxiously-looked-for travellers had arrived, and a

multitude quickly assembled to hear the decision of "the council of the Apostles." The letter was publicly read, the contents of which filled the hearts of the listeners with joy. Ages have passed since that epistle mouldered into dust, but the sentence of James continues to be read in the congregations of the faithful, who still rejoice in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made his people free.

Ten years after Paul's journey to Antioch with the letter from the council, we find him again at Jerusalem, and being welcomed by James and all the elders, to whom "he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry."¹ But there were those in the city who no sooner heard of his arrival than they sought to kill him. The gospel had spread rapidly, and "many thousands of Jews"² had become Christians. But still the infant Church was in the midst of foes, who, though with good reason distracted and terrified at the fearful state of their country, (famines, wars, massacres, and robberies desolating every part of it,) could yet consult with one another how best to overthrow the religion of Jesus. The Jews were not permitted to slay Paul; and he was sent a prisoner to Cæsarea, guarded by two hundred soldiers, two hundred spearmen, and seventy horsemen. The

¹ Acts xxi. 19.

² Acts xxi. 20.

Scribes and Pharisees were enraged because their intended victim had escaped out of their hands, and their malice was turned against James.

Ananus was then high priest. He was a bold, merciless man, and undertook to put James to death, but it was fully four years before he accomplished his purpose. Felix, who kept Paul in prison two years at Cæsarea, was on account of his unpopularity removed from his post, and was succeeded by Festus, who, two years after he was appointed governor, died. It was in the interval between the death of Festus and the arrival of Albanus, the [new governor, that Ananus took upon himself to call together the Sanhedrim, which was the chief council of the Jews, formed of seventy members, over whom the high priest usually presided. The Sanhedrim was composed of priests, doctors of the law, and elders. These were "the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders,"¹ who met at the palace of Caiaphas to consult how they might take Jesus. Before these judges James was brought, and was by them condemned to death. They wished, however, to have some plausible reason for killing him, so, Hegesippus, an ecclesiastical historian who lived in the second century informs us, the Scribes and Pharisees hurried him up to the top of the temple, and

¹ Matt. xxvi. 3.]

cunningly said to him, "We beseech thee, restrain the people, for they believe in Jesus as though he were the Christ ; we pray thee, persuade the people, that they be not deceived ; stand upon the pillar of the temple that thou mayest be seen, and that thy words may be heard by all the people." James was then placed upon the battlements of a wing of the temple, so that the multitude below might both see and hear him. The undaunted Apostle then said, with a loud voice, "What do you ask me of Jesus, the Son of man, seeing that he sitteth on the right hand of God in heaven, and shall come in the clouds of heaven ?" Many of his hearers were convinced of the truth of what he said, and cried, "Hosanna in the highest to the Son of David !" The Scribes and Pharisees were so enraged at this, that they flung James from the pinnacle on which he stood. Though much hurt, he was not killed ; and, rising upon his knees, he prayed, "O Lord God, Father, I beseech thee to forgive them, for they know not what they do." But his enemies, instead of being softened, only became more inflamed against him, and attacked him as he knelt upon the ground. His brother Simeon, Epiphanius says, was near the fatal spot, and he entreated the brutal murderers to spare the life of the just and righteous man who was praying for them. But, blinded by passion, they cast a shower

of stones upon their holy victim, till one, who was a fuller, having in his hand a club which he made use of in his trade, struck the Apostle on the head with it and dashed out his brains. Thus died, in the ninety-sixth year of his age, James the Just, called also Oblias or Ozliam, which means "the defence and fortress of the people." This latter name was given him by the Jews because they considered the safety and happiness of the nation depended upon his prayers. James was slain about the year A.D. 62, eighteen years after James the Great had in the same city been killed by Herod. The people, so Hegesippus tells us, testified their respect for James the Less, by placing a monument over the spot where he was murdered. This memorial was highly valued, but it did not long exist, for eight years afterwards the Romans, when they took the city, destroyed it.

The death of St James was a great grief to all upright men, even to those who were not Christians, and when the hand of God was so heavy upon the Jews, they believed, so it appears from Josephus, that the fearful calamities that befell them were the effects of the vengeance of the Almighty for their having barbarously murdered James the Just. He was buried, according to Gregory of Tours, on the Mount of Olives, in a tomb he had himself built, and in which he had interred the "just and

devout”¹ Simeon, and Zacharias the father of John the Baptist. James, the son of Cleophas, was called James the Less, probably because he was lower in stature and younger than James the Great, and these titles were given them by way of distinction.

James the Less was the author of one of the epistles in the holy volume ; when he wrote it is not exactly known, but it is supposed to have been during the year before his martyrdom. Great errors had arisen in consequence of the misinterpretation of the doctrine of justification by faith, as taught by St Paul, many believing that moral duties were not necessary, and had, consequently, given themselves up to all manner of evil courses. But St James in his epistle undeceived them, for he told them they must be “doers of the word, and not hearers only ;”² they must bridle their tongues, and not deceive their own hearts ; that they must relieve the afflicted, and keep themselves free from the vices of the world ; be “peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.”³ For unless their faith led them to practise these virtues, it was dead, and their religion vain ; in other words, that they had no proper faith nor real religion at all ; for if the tree be made good, it must produce

¹ Luke ii. 25. ² James i. 22. ³ James iii. 17.

good fruit ; and if the fountain be made pure, it must send forth pure water. In the latter part of his epistle, he alludes to the approaching destruction of Jerusalem, and exhorts the Jewish Christians to be patient, and to stablish their hearts for the coming of the Lord.

St James remained bishop of Jerusalem until his death. He had charge of the mother church about thirty years, during which time he laboured with the greatest diligence and faithfulness, preaching with such success that the most stubborn were convinced, and many of the nobles in Jerusalem became Christians. Hegesippus says that his piety was most fervent, and sincere prayer was his delight, and he constantly retired to the temple to perform his devotions. He was held in such veneration by the people, not only on account of the miracles he wrought, but because of his holiness and purity, that they followed him wherever he went, deeming it a blessed privilege to touch even the hem of his garment. And after his death Eusebius mentions that the episcopal chair in which he used to sit was carefully preserved, and regarded almost as sacred. His charity was great, and his temperance and humility admired by every one. Indeed, he was so much beloved and honoured, that almost all Jerusalem united in giving him the title of James the Just.

SAINT JUDE.

COLLECT FOR SAINT SIMON AND SAINT JUDE,
APOSTLES' DAY.

O ALMIGHTY GOD, who hast built thy Church upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the head corner-stone : Grant us so to be joined together in unity of spirit by their doctrine, that we may be made an holy temple, acceptable unto thee ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



BLESSED, indeed, were Alphæus and Mary in their children. The history of their first-born you have just read. Simon, or Simeon, was, upon the death of his brother James, unanimously elected bishop of Jerusalem. Alphæus and Mary had, there can be little doubt, long before this honour was conferred upon their son, closed their eyes in death. But we may be assured that he, who was thought worthy of so high a trust, would be, so long as his parents lived, the joy and comfort of their hearts.

Joses is generally believed to have actively de-

voted himself to the service of the Lord Jesus ; and Jude, you know, was an Apostle.

Blessed as Alphæus and Mary were in their children, no less so were the brethren, "James and Joses and Simon and Judas,"¹ in having such pious parents. I cannot tell you so much of the father as of the mother of Jude, but no one can suppose that Alphæus was aught than a true follower of Jesus. He had trained up his family "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;"² and perhaps he was not less eminent than his dear partner for piety, courage, and devotion.

Alphæus, or Cleophas, was one of the two favoured disciples whom our Saviour walked with after his resurrection. He and his companion were on the road to Emmaus, a village about seven miles from Jerusalem. As they walked they conversed about all the strange things that had happened. "While they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them ; but their eyes were holden, that they should not know him."³ Our Saviour asked them what was the subject of their conversation, and why they were so sad. "And the one of them, whose name was Cleophas, answering, said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these

¹ Matt. xiii. 55. ² Eph. vi. 4. ³ Luke xxiv. 15, 16.

days?"¹ Jesus asked them, What things? And they told him all about the mighty works Jesus of Nazareth had done, and that he had been crucified, and how astonished they were at the account they had heard of his resurrection. Then Jesus upbraided them with their unbelief, "and beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further. But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them. And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him: and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures? And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem."² The companion of Cleophas is supposed by many to have been St Luke.

I know nothing more of the father of Jude, but his mother was one of those holy women who went with Jesus about Galilee, through every city and village, ministering unto him of their substance.

¹ Luke xxiv. 18.

² Luke xxiv. 27-33.

These pious women likewise followed our Saviour on his last journey from Galilee to Jerusalem, to attend, so far as lay in their power, to his temporal necessities. It must not be supposed that they devoted themselves exclusively to Jesus; doubtless, the Apostles also participated in the benefits of their thoughtful care. Two, at least, of these females had sons in the little band who accompanied our Lord; and motherly instinct alone would lead them to respect the wants of their children. I need scarcely remind you how much courage and self-denial were required to act as Mary and her friends did. Home and all its comforts must have been forgotten; and often, footsore and weary, they would reach a city only to be treated by its inhabitants with contempt; and, like the blessed Jesus whom they served, would have nowhere to lay their heads. Let us hope that in Jerusalem they met with friends who could hospitably entertain them. Johanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, had ministered to Jesus of her substance in Galilee. She, too, had followed our Saviour to Jerusalem, where, perhaps, she had wealthy friends who offered a temporary home to her and her companions. Joseph, the counsellor, who was "a good man and a just,"¹ and the wealthy Nicodemus, would neither of

¹ Luke xxiii. 50.

them, surely, refuse to shelter such true handmaidens of the Lord. These brave women were faithful to the last. The disciples of Jesus forsook him when the hour of trial came, and many of them did not venture to return to him. But Mary the mother of Jesus, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene were with our Saviour on Calvary. Most probably they had formed part of that great company who, weeping and lamenting, followed Jesus to the place of execution, and then stood afar off, beholding the crucifixion. Love, however, conquered fear; and, regardless of the rude soldiers and the cruel and excited mob, the three Maries, with the Apostle John, took up their position at the foot of the Cross. Through that day of agony these devoted and loving women were supported from above. Human nature alone could not have sustained them beneath such a weight of sorrow.

John took the mother of Jesus at once to his own home; but the other Maries remained on Calvary, and attended the funeral of Jesus. The evening of that terrible day arrived. The dead body of Christ hung upon the cross, and the people had returned home; and a pit, doubtless, was prepared in Golgotha, in which were to be flung the three corpses. But one of them must be rescued from such an ignominious grave, for the

prophet had said, "He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death."¹ Joseph of Arimathæa, an honourable member of the Sanhedrim, "being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus ; and Pilate gave him leave. He came, therefore, and took the body of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pound weight."² The body was then, according to the Jewish custom, prepared for its burial, and was wrapped with the aromatic spices in linen clothes. Not far had the sacred corpse to be carried. Joseph had a new sepulchre hewn out of a rock in a garden near Calvary. In this tomb Jesus was laid, and a stone was rolled against the door of it. "And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses beheld where he was laid."³ Jesus was entombed. The Sabbath dawned ; and Joseph, Nicodemus, and the two Maries left the sepulchre. How they spent the Sabbath we are not told. Perhaps, after a few hours' rest, Mary, the mother of Jude, sought her sister, the Virgin, to sympathize with and comfort her ; or perhaps, in perfect retirement, she pondered over all that had happened.

¹ Isa. liii. 9. ² John xix. 38, 39. ³ Mark xv. 47.

In the meantime the chief priests and Pharisees had, with the permission of Pilate, made the sepulchre as they thought secure by sealing the stone, and setting a guard of soldiers to watch. As soon as the Jewish Sabbath was over, Mary the wife of Cleophas, Mary Magdalene, and Salome the mother of James and John bought sweet spices, which they prepared by mixing them into an ointment. With this they intended to embalm the body of Jesus, the funeral rites having been too hastily performed on the Friday evening; and when the day began to dawn, while it was yet dark, they, with the other women, went to the sepulchre. One cannot but be struck with their courage. The Apostles had hidden themselves for fear of the Jews. The counsellor Joseph was a disciple, but *secretly*, for fear of the Jews. Nicodemus visited Jesus, but under cover of the night, for fear of the Jews. The women, however, who followed Jesus from Galilee, feared nothing human. Love with them had cast out fear. The night was dark and stormy, but occasionally the moon would emerge from behind a cloud, and throw a faint and sickly light on the surrounding objects. Perhaps, when they had passed through the gate of the city, it showed them Calvary, with its three crosses, on one of which so lately hung the Prince of Life. A shudder, it may be, passed through them as they

looked upon the instruments of death, but the only anxiety they felt was with regard to the stone. "Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?"¹ they said among themselves. They knew not of the seal and the watch. Did they, one naturally asks, feel the earthquake? Or were they startled by soldiers, in wild terror, rushing past them? Both were possible, but still they were not to be shaken from their purpose. When they reached the garden, the sun had risen to shed his light and heat alike upon the holy women, the fond disciples, who in the city mourned and wept, and upon the hardened, cruel Jews. The Sun of Righteousness had also risen—the Prince of Love and Peace, "the bright and morning star,"² to his beloved; but, to the Jews, with a self-invoked curse upon their heads—a God terrible in his vengeance. The women approached what they supposed to be the abode of the dead, and beheld with surprise the stone rolled away. What would they think? Two of the party had, only a few hours previously, seen the door of the sepulchre made secure by this very great stone. Who had rolled it away? Perhaps the Jews, whose malice extended beyond the grave, were rifling the tomb, in order that they might insult the remains of Jesus. If so, what mercy could a party of females expect,

¹ Mark xvi. 3.² Rev. xxii. 16.

if they fell into their hands? But whatever were their thoughts, they pressed on, and entered the gloomy vault, a room capable of holding ten persons. They found it empty. The body of Jesus was gone, and, "as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold two men stood by them in shining garments."¹ *Now* they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth. The angels told them that Jesus had risen from the dead, and that they should see him in Galilee. "And they departed quickly from the sepulchre, with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word. And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him. Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there they shall see me."²

I know but little more of Mary the mother of Jude. After the ascension, she was with the disciples in a large upper room in Jerusalem, where they assembled for prayer and supplication, and from that time there is no authentic account of her, but through all ages she must be regarded as a pattern of devotion, self-denial, and courage.

Beyond the fact that he was the son of Cleophas and Mary, the sacred history gives no information

¹ Luke xxiv. 4.

² Matt. xxviii. 8-10.

about Jude till he was ordained an Apostle. As our Lord's cousin, he had probably known Jesus all his life ; but this is simply conjecture.

You will have observed that Jude is called by Matthew Lebbæus and Thaddæus, by Mark Thaddæus, and by Luke and John Judas. The last name had, as being that of the vile traitor, become odious to the disciples, so the two first evangelists avoid it. Thaddæus means the same as Judas, and Lebbæus signifies "lion-hearted." St John and St Luke wrote their Gospels some time after the other evangelists, so that, as the feeling of dislike to the name of Judas would as time wore on become weaker, they had less hesitation in using it.

It has been supposed, but not with any degree of certainty, that Jude was born near Mount Carmel. Like several of the Apostles, he is seldom mentioned by name in the sacred history, but as he was eminent for his firmness and boldness, we cannot doubt that while attending upon our Saviour he had many opportunities of proving his zeal and devotion.

At the last supper, when Jesus, after telling his disciples that he must leave them, was comforting them, he said that he would manifest himself to them that loved him. "Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest

thyself unto us, and not unto the world?"¹ Jude was like the rest, thinking that Jesus would reign as a temporal monarch, and he could not understand how a king, exalted on a throne, and ruling the nations, should show himself only to a small company of faithful servants. Jesus told him that the manifestation of himself would be his dwelling in the hearts of true believers, and that the Father would, through his intercession, send the Holy Spirit to teach them, and make those things plain which were now difficult for them to understand.

After our Lord's ascension, Jude preached the Gospel in different parts of Judæa and Galilee. He then, it is said, went to the cities of Arabia, and afterwards into Syria, and from thence, Nicephorus adds, to Edessa, a city of Mesopotamia, about nine miles from the Euphrates. At the last place he found the seeds of Christianity had already been sown by one of the seventy disciples, of the name of Thaddæus. This Thaddæus had been sent, Eusebius relates, by St Thomas to Edessa, very shortly after the ascension. There he healed diseases, wrought miracles, and taught the religion of Jesus with such success that the governor, Abgarus, and his people, became converts to the faith. King Abgarus offered him costly gifts, but Thaddæus refused them with scorn, telling him they

¹ John xiv. 22.

had little reason to receive from others what they had freely relinquished and given up themselves. Nearly three hundred years afterwards there was found among the records of the city of Edessa a full account of this matter. Jude at Edessa perfected what Thaddæus had begun, and by his preaching and miracles confirmed the souls of the faithful. His principal labours, it seems, were in Persia, where it is understood he suffered martyrdom. The manner of his death is unknown, and the time of it uncertain ; but it is generally believed he survived his brother James some years.

You will often have read the short Epistle of St Jude in the New Testament. It is supposed to have been written after the destruction of Jerusalem, and was addressed to all Christians. He in the plainest terms warned them against the vile doctrines of certain heretics who troubled the Church. Jude exposed and denounced those "dreamers,"¹ as he called them. "Clouds without water, carried about with winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever."²

Jude was one of the married Apostles ; but who his wife was, I cannot tell you. There is an in-

¹ Jude 8.

² Jude 12, 13.

teresting account given of two of his grandchildren. Hegesippus states that the wicked Emperor Domitian, fearing a claimant might arise for the throne of David, and the Jews rally round him, ordered all to be killed who were of the stock of David. He was informed that there were in Judæa some of the kingly line, in the persons of Jude's grandchildren, remaining, and he commanded that they should be brought to him. The Emperor first asked them what was their manner of life. They replied, husbandry. He next inquired concerning the kingdom of Christ, and when it should appear. To this they replied that it was a heavenly and spiritual, not a temporal, kingdom, and that it would not be manifested till the end of the world, when he, coming in glory, should judge the quick and the dead. Domitian, hearing this, dismissed them unbound, and, by edict, stayed the persecution then moved against the Christians. These grandsons of Jude afterwards presided over churches, and lived until the time of Trajan.

It can scarcely be considered out of place here to give a brief account of Simeon, the brother of St Jude, whose life was by no means less interesting than those of the rest of his family. Eight years after he had been appointed to preside over the affairs of the mother church, Jerusalem was besieged by the Romans. Simeon, however, warned

by our Saviour, was one of those who noted the signs of the times. The earthquakes, famines, wars, and pestilences which were desolating the country, he knew were only the forerunners of greater woes. The "fearful sights and great signs"¹ from heaven, which so preplexed the people, were to the Christians intimations that they must prepare for their flight. Of these "fearful sights and great signs" Josephus, in his "Wars of the Jews," gives a most interesting account. He speaks of a star that resembled a sword, which stood over the city for an entire year; and that before the Jewish rebellion, at the feast of unleavened bread, "on the eighth day of the month Nisan,* and at the ninth hour of the night,† so great a light shone round the altar and the holy house, that it appeared to be bright daytime, which light lasted for half an hour. . . . Moreover, the eastern gate of the inner court of the temple, which was of brass and vastly heavy, and had been with difficulty shut by twenty men, and rested upon a basis armed with iron, and had bolts fastened very deep into the firm floor, which was there made of one entire stone, was seen to be opened of its own accord about the sixth hour of the

¹ Luke xxi. 11.

* Part of March and April. † Three o'clock in the morning.

night.”* Josephus also speaks of chariots, and soldiers in their armour, being seen in the heavens. He also says that, at the feast of Pentecost, “as the priests were going by night into the inner court of the temple, as their custom was, to perform their sacred ministrations, they said that, in the first place, they felt a quaking and heard a great noise, and after that they heard a sound as of a great multitude saying, ‘Let us remove hence.’”

Tacitus, the Roman historian, who lived in the first century, gives a similar account of these “fearful sights and great signs”¹ from heaven. He says that “armies were seen engaging in the heavens, arms glittering, and the temple shone with the sudden fire of the clouds; the doors of the temple opened suddenly, and a voice greater than human was heard that the gods were departing, and at the same time a great motion of their departing.”

The Jewish historian also speaks of a man who, between seven and eight years before the destruction of Jerusalem, went to the temple and began on a sudden to cry aloud—“A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the holy house, a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides, and a voice against this whole people!” This was his

* Midnight.

¹ Luke xxi. 11.

cry as he went about by day and by night in all the lanes of the city. In vain did the rulers try to silence him. He was whipped till his bones were laid bare. He shed no tears, but at every stroke of the lash he cried, "Woe, woe to Jerusalem." For seven years and five months, though beaten every day, his melancholy cry still sounded through the city, till the enemy besieged it, when it ceased; for, as he was going round upon the wall, he cried out with his utmost force, Woe, woe to the city again, and to the people, and to the holy house!" And just as he added at the last,—“Woe, woe to myself also!” there came a stone out of one of the engines, and smote him, and killed him immediately.

Simeon, with a multitude of Christians, fled from Jerusalem, but not, says Epiphanius, till they had been warned by an angel that they must depart. The enemy unwittingly favoured their departure. Josephus says that Cestius Gallus, who was at that time before the walls of Jerusalem, raised the siege and retired, when he could with ease have taken the city. The short-sighted Jewish historian knew not the cause of this strange conduct on the part of the enemy: but Simeon and his flock were aware that a power the Roman commander could not resist directed his movements, and they would thank God for opening the

way for their escape. Even as their forefathers fled from Egypt, did the Jewish Christians flee from Jerusalem when the signal was given. He that was on the house-top went not down into his dwelling to fetch anything, however precious, but hastily pressed from one roof to another till he reached the walls of the city. And he that was in the field went not home to fetch even his clothes, (the upper garments which he would not wear over the tunic when working in the fields), but took advantage of his position at once to make his escape. Not only did the Christians avail themselves of the opportunity of the withdrawal of the Roman army, but many of the principal unbelieving Jews did so also. Doubtless, the latter fled in all directions, but the way the Christians were to take had been pointed out by a divine guide. To the mountains of Peræa the followers of Jesus directed their steps. Oh what a touching sight it must have been, the venerable bishop and his flock—composed of the aged and infirm, the sickly and the strong, mothers with new-born infants, children of all ages, youths and maidens, and those in the prime of life—slowly traversing the banks of the Jordan, to Pella, the Zoar of the Christians! How often would many of the travellers pause on their way, and, with clasped hands and streaming eyes, implore God to protect the friends they had left behind, guilty as

they were. Many, many prayers would be offered for parents, husbands, wives, children, brothers, and sisters, who remained in the doomed city. Many supplications that, if they must perish, they might be led to cry at the last hour for mercy, in the name of Jesus, and that their pardon might be sealed in his blood. Past the enemy's camp and the banditti's lair, over rocky steepes and dismal swamps, the Lord guarded his servants ; not one Christian, it is said, perished. Jerusalem and her temple were utterly destroyed, only three towers and part of the wall were allowed by the Roman general to remain standing. The magnificent city, whose fame had extended over the world, was "dug up to the foundations," Josephus tells us, "and there was nothing to make those that came thither believe it had ever been inhabited." The vial of God's vengeance was fully poured out.

When the war was ended, Simeon, and, doubtless, many of his flock, returned to Jerusalem. Possibly, as their journey back drew to its close, they ascended the Mount of Olives, and, from the spot where Jesus forty years before stood when he wept over the city, they gazed upon the vast ruins before them. Vainly would they look for the splendid temple of polished marble, which, like a mountain of snow, had been wont to dazzle their eyes with its brightness. Where was

the gorgeous palace of Herod? and where the judgment hall of Pilate? and where, to the Christians how dear, the large upper room, in which had been instituted the holy supper of the Lord, and in which the Christians assembled after the ascension of their Lord? Gone, gone for ever. And as they gazed upon the wreck, and thought of their desolated homes and lost friends, they would, like the captive Jews of old, sit down and weep.

Jerusalem was still dear to the Jewish Christians, and they, with their venerable bishop, made the ruined city their home. And now, we might have supposed that Simeon would have been permitted to pass the remainder of his days in peace. No fear now of encountering hoary-headed sinners who had joined in the cry, "His blood be on us and on our children,"¹ and who to the last hated the followers of him whom they crucified. No fear now of the cruel scribes and Pharisees who had slain his brother, and thirsted for his blood also. God's vengeance had overtaken them, and they would trouble him no more.

But God willed that his aged servant should be still further tried. The Gnostics, a vile sect, who held many of the doctrines of Simon Magus, became the bane of the Christians. With the most

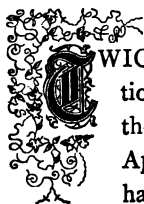
¹ Matthew xxvii. 25.

absurd tenets, they admitted that Christ came from God to free the world from evil, and thus they proved a great stumbling-block to those whose faith was not established. Of course Simeon opposed these false teachers with all his might, and they resolved to destroy him. Eusebius says that the Emperor Trajan was, like his predecessor Domitian, very fearful of the Jews revolting, and rallying round some leader of the family of David, so he sent down a command that whoever could be found of the stock of David should be put to death. This was an opportunity the Gnostics seized upon to accomplish their wicked purpose, so they accused Simeon of being a descendant of David. A journey of a hundred miles or more had the venerable bishop, then one hundred and twenty years old, to take in order that he might appear before Atticus the governor of Syria. He was examined by torture for several days together, and endured his sufferings with the greatest firmness, till they were terminated by death on the cross. Thus died the venerable Simeon, the last, in all probability, of that holy family, the history of which cannot fail to interest those who sympathize with the pious, the zealous, the faithful, the self-denying, the generous, and the brave.

SAINT SIMON.

COLLECT FOR SAINT SIMON AND SAINT JUDE, APOSTLES'
DAY.

O ALMIGHTY GOD, who hast built thy Church upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the head corner-stone: Grant us so to be joined together in unity of spirit by their doctrine, that we may be made an holy temple, acceptable unto thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



—◆—
TWICE only is the Apostle Simon mentioned by name in the Scriptures, and then but in company with all the other Apostles, and yet he is supposed to have been one of the first disciples of our Lord. Very little indeed is known of his history before Christ began his ministry, or after the ascension, and yet if a book were written, called, "Simon Zelotes," containing a full account of all his actions—all he heard and all he witnessed as a chosen disciple of the Lord Jesus—one volume would not contain what would have to be related. How many mighty works of our

Saviour must he have witnessed, and how many beautiful discourses from the lips of the divine Teacher must he have listened to? Was he not one of the guests at the feast Matthew made? Did he not at the command of Jesus preach the Gospel, heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, and cast out devils? Did not Simon help to distribute the bread and fish to the five thousand men, besides women and children? and afterwards to four thousand men, besides women and children? Was not his life twice saved in storms on the Sea of Galilee by the mighty power of Jesus? Was he not with our Saviour at Bethabara when Lazarus died; and did he not go to Bethany to be present at the raising of him whom Jesus loved? Did he not form part of the triumphal procession when our Lord publicly entered into Jerusalem? Were not his feet washed by the holy Jesus before the last supper, and did he not receive from the hands of the Saviour the sacred emblems of his most blessed body and blood? But I cannot even simply enumerate all the interesting events that Simon, as an Apostle, must have been connected with.

Matthew and Mark speak of him as Simon, the Canaanite; and Luke calls him Simon Zelotes. There is a difference of opinion as to why he is called the Canaanite, or why Zelotes. Some

think that the word Canaanite is, in our version of the New Testament, wrongly spelt, and that it ought to be Cananite, or a native of Cana ; for, as Jesus lived only four miles from Cana in Galilee, it is more than probable he knew many of its inhabitants, and that from among them he would select some of his Apostles. Others are of opinion that being called the Canaanite is no proof that he came from Cana, but that the title was given him by our Saviour, to denote his great zeal. In Hebrew, those versed in the language tell us the word Cana has almost the same letters and the same sound as the word for zeal has, and that it was not unusual in such cases to use one word in place of the other. Our Lord was in the habit of giving names to his disciples, expressive of some peculiar characteristic of, or circumstance connected with them. Simon, the son of Jona, he surnamed Peter, or a rock. James and John he called Boanerges, or sons of thunder ; therefore, it would not be singular if the Apostle Simon had a title given him denoting his burning zeal, his great love for his Master, and his eager wish to advance Christ's religion in the world. The disciples of Christ have not now names conferred upon them, denoting their peculiar gifts, but do not all bear one title—that of Christian? a name

given originally, as some suppose, by heathens to the followers of Christ. Let us ask ourselves whether we are so living that, if we were in the society of idolaters, they would—judging from our actions and conversation—pronounce us to be Christians? Alas! too many bear the title, but, whether at home or abroad, have no resemblance either to the great author of their faith, or to those first disciples who not only gloried in being called Christians, but in suffering for the sake of him whose name they bore. Let all those who are ashamed of their title think of the martyr Attalus, mentioned by Eusebius, who was led about the amphitheatre at Rome, that he might be exposed to the hatred and derision of the people. But he triumphed in this, that a tablet was carried before him with the inscription, “This is Attalus, the Christian.” And of Sanctus, who, being often asked by the president what his name was, what his city and country, and whether he was a freeman or a servant, only replied that he was a Christian, considering this name to be country, kindred, and everything to him. And let them think of all the noble army of martyrs, who gladly endured every kind of torment rather than disown the name of Christian.

With regard to the title St Luke gives Simon,

that of Zelotes, or the zealous, some have thought that it was conferred upon him by our Saviour, as being of the same signification as that of Canaanite. Others are of opinion that Simon had, before his call to the discipleship, been one of the sect called Zealots, who regarded themselves as the immediate successors of Phineas, who, in his zeal for the honour of God, slew Zimri and Cozbi—an act which “was counted unto him for righteousness unto all generations for evermore.”¹ The Zealots took upon themselves to protect the law and the religion of the Jews, and considered that they were at liberty to execute capital punishment upon offenders without bringing them before the Sanhedrim. For example, if a blasphemer cursed God by the name of any idol, the Zealot who next met him might immediately kill him. By degrees the Zealots so abused their privileges that they committed all kinds of wild extravagances, and became the pest of the commonwealth. They were continually advising the people to throw off the Roman yoke, and succeeded in creating the greatest confusion. Josephus writes in bitter terms of them. He says that, instead of being zealous in good undertakings, they were zealous in the worst actions. Mercy was with them unknown. They trampled

¹ Ps. cvi. 31.

on all the laws of man, and laughed at the laws of God. According to his account the Zealots were one main cause of the greatest calamities that befell Jerusalem. When the Romans were about to besiege the city, the Zealots created only tumults and factions within the walls, and, with the help of robbers, murdered twelve thousand of the nobility and principal men of the city for the sake of plunder. Had the Jewish historian been a Christian, he would, when recounting this barbarous act of the Zealots, have reminded his readers of the prophecy of the Christian bishop, the revered and beloved James, "Go to now, ye rich men; weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasures together for the last days."¹ The Zealots, we may readily suppose, were not so corrupted at the time when our Saviour selected his Apostles. We need not, therefore, think of Simon, if he were of that sect, as having been such an one as those who were with justice regarded as the curse of their country.

After the ascension we find Simon Zelotes, with

¹ James v. 3.

the rest of the Apostles, waiting in Jerusalem "for the promise of the Father."¹ Jesus, before his death, had said to his disciples, "I will not leave you comfortless,"² or, as the more literal translation is, "I will not leave you orphans." After the ascension the disciples were indeed orphans. Jesus had gone up into heaven, and the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, had not yet come. In a large upper room the Apostles and disciples, numbering about one hundred and twenty persons, met for prayer and supplication, and most probably here, and in the temple, spent the greater part of the ten days which intervened between the ascension of Christ and the descent of the Holy Ghost.

Among those mentioned as being in the upper room for prayer and supplication was Mary, the mother of Jesus. When last we heard of her, St John had taken her to his own home. No account is given in the holy story of the interviews she had with our Saviour after his resurrection; but it cannot be supposed that, while so many others were being comforted and cheered by the special notice of their risen Lord, that the bereaved mother would not at least be equally favoured. After the Pentecost, she, as it were, disappears, as she is never again mentioned in the Scriptures.

¹ Acts i. 4.

² John xiv. 18.

Considering her position, very few facts relating to Mary are recorded in the Bible, and no account whatever is given of her death. God dealt with her as with Moses, of whom it is said "no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day."¹ Some are of opinion that the Virgin suffered martyrdom, and that Simeon, in his prophecy, "A sword shall pierce through thine own soul also,"² had reference to the mode of her death. But the prediction more probably alludes to excessive grief, which pierces like a sword, and which Mary specially endured when she stood by the cross beholding her dying son. To the dregs she drained her cup of misery. The loved one who had for thirty years blessed her peaceful home in Nazareth, and for whom she felt both natural and heaven-born love, the pride and glory of her life, her son, her Saviour, and her God, was before her eyes, nailed to the accursed tree. Oh, the agony of the poor mother, so near and so helpless! Surely many swords must have pierced her gentle breast.

To return to Simon. Ten days after our Lord's ascension, he, with the other Apostles, received the gift of the Holy Ghost. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all, with one accord, in one place. And suddenly there came

¹ Deut. xxxiv. 6.

² Luke ii. 35.

a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”¹

The Pentecost was, as you are probably aware, a Jewish festival, kept in commemoration of the giving of the law on Mount Sinai. It was also called the day of first-fruits, because on this day the Jews offered thanksgivings to God for the bounties of harvest, and presented to him the first-fruits of the wheat harvest in bread baked of the new corn. This festival was typical of the miraculous effusion of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and the first-fruits of the Christian Church. At the feast of Pentecost, the number of Jews assembled at Jerusalem would be very great—collected from nearly all parts of the world ; and they who, at the Passover, had seen Jesus crucified, would have now convincing proof that he was the Lord of glory, the promised Messiah. On Whit-Sunday, Christians celebrate the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles. In the early church this was the great day for baptisms, because on it the Apostles were baptized with the Holy Ghost, and

¹ Acts ii. 1-4.

the three thousand converts received the holy rite on the same day. It was called Whit-Sunday, or White-Sunday, because candidates for baptism were arrayed in white garments. When the Apostles were endowed with the supernatural power of speaking many languages, the miracle of Babel was reversed ; and he who had then confounded the tongues of men for their dispersion, now poured out the gift of them to unite all as one in Christ.

With what joy would the news spread among the faithful, that the Comforter had come, and that the Apostles had obtained the promised gift. Jesus was then, they knew, not only risen, but glorified ; and so his disciples felt fresh power and courage. As lambs among wolves, they had been pent up in Jerusalem ; but now they had no fear of their enemies, and endued with the power of the Holy Spirit, boldly came forth and declared their faith. Great was the success of their first day's labour. Three thousand became converts, and were baptized, "and they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."¹

Simon remained with the other Apostles until their dispersion throughout the world, when he, Nicephorus in his history of the Church tells us,

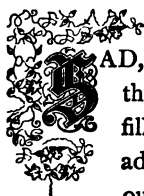
¹ Acts ii. 42.

went to Africa, and, among the most barbarous nations, preached the Gospel. After then, it is said by the same writer, Dorotheus and others, that he sailed westward, and finally reached Britain. Supposing this to be true, (and it is not improbable, for it is certain that Christianity was introduced into this island in the time of the Apostles,) how dear should the name of Simon Zelotes be to us ! When we read of the Apostles travelling over every part of the world, and preaching in all the cities, we must be forcibly struck with the wisdom and goodness of God, in conferring upon them the gift of tongues. Even now, with all the advantages of books, it takes the diligent student years to acquire a perfect knowledge of a foreign language. How much more difficult would it be with the Apostles, in whose days printing was unknown ? Picture to yourselves Simon or Paul in England without the gift they had received on the day of Pentecost. Miracles they might perform, but what would be the result, if they could only speak in their native language ? Doubtless, the sick would flock after them to be healed, the dead would be brought to them to be raised to life, and crowds, out of curiosity, would attend them ; but not a soul would be led to Christ. And how did the Britons treat the zealous Simon, who had left his home, friends, and all he most

valued on earth, and had travelled many, many miles to convey to the heathen the glad tidings of a Saviour's love? They crucified him. No monument marks the spot where were entombed the precious remains of the martyr, but in every Briton's heart the name of Simon Zelotes should have an enduring place.

JUDAS ISCARIOT.

“Who also betrayed him.”—MATT. x. 4.



AD, indeed, is it to have to turn from the contemplation of men who have filled the minds of all Christians with admiration, to one who must excite in our breasts feelings alone of loathing and horror. Not a redeeming trait in his character did the traitor, Judas, so far as we know, possess. He was hypocritical, heartless, ungrateful, cruel, and covetous to a degree. This wretched man is supposed to have been a native of Kerioth, a city situated on the borders of Judæa. Look at your map of Palestine, and you will find that Kerioth lies many miles south of Jerusalem, far away from the homes of Jesus and those of most, if not all, of his disciples. A stranger, then, we may suppose Judas had been to the little band whom our Lord selected as his immediate attendants. No hesitation had the faithful eleven in giving to him the

right hand of fellowship. The noble-minded, generous, and devoted followers of Christ would not suspect that, in the guise of a lamb, a wolf had entered their fold. Jesus, however, knew the false heart that was concealed in the bosom of Judas. For two years our Saviour tolerated the presence of the evil one, treating him with every kindness; and thus was fulfilled that which was written, "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me."¹ The question naturally suggests itself, Why did Judas continue a disciple of our Lord? He saw that Jesus was "rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief,"² whom the wretched Nazarenes even would not suffer to dwell in their city, and who was particularly obnoxious to the rulers and chief men in every town or village wherein he for a while sojourned; and yet Judas clung to him and was his constant attendant. No easy task had he to perform, for he shared the labours and hardships of the other Apostles, without the support that enabled them to bear all things cheerfully for Christ's sake. No love for his divine Master animated the breast of the traitor; and a nature such as his was quite incapable of

¹ Psalm xli. 9.

Isaiah liii. 3.

appreciating the beneficence of the Saviour's character. Why then did he remain with the despised Nazarene? One reason, no doubt, was that all the money belonging to the Apostles was entrusted to his care; or, in other words, he carried the purse, and bought what was necessary for the whole party. Now, the love of money was with Judas a passion, and though the amount he had the charge of was not, we may suppose, large, he contrived to purloin part of it, for we read that "he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein."¹ The Greek word, translated *bare*, might be rendered took away or purloined. Doubtless St John meant this. Another motive which Judas had, perhaps, for clinging to Jesus, was the notion he entertained, with the rest, that Christ would reign as a temporal monarch, and that those who continued in his service during the time of his humiliation would be nearest his throne when he assumed his proper dignity, and that places of power and wealth would be conferred upon them. The more we study the traitor's whole course, the more we must see how dead he was to all but the accomplishment of his worldly schemes. No circumstances tempted him to throw off the mask of hypocrisy, and no action was too base that

¹ John xii. 6.

furthered his views. Each time, when he supposed he was about to perish on the Sea of Galilee, and was saved by the mighty voice of Jesus quelling the winds, one would have thought he must have been so overpowered with awe and gratitude, that he would have fallen down before the divine Being who had just displayed his power and love, and, with tears of penitence, have entreated him to make him worthy of such a friend. But, alas! he could only cry, "Lord, save me," when his poor body was in danger: there was no cry for mercy upon his precious soul. What must have been his thoughts when he saw Jesus not only heal the sick and raise the dead, but felt those miraculous powers conferred upon himself by our Saviour? Did he not tremble beneath the all-searching eye of his Master? It would seem not. He received his commission with the rest of the Apostles, and with apparently as much zeal as the others, and, for aught we know, with as much success he did as Jesus had commanded him. Oh, what an accomplished hypocrite he must have been! In the crowded city, among the twelve, no particular notice might have been drawn to him; and, even when Jesus went into retirement and discoursed with his disciples, they would not, perhaps—enraptured as they would be with the divine

words that fell from the lips of their beloved Master—notice that one of their company, though in an attitude of deep attention, was absent, restless, and impatient. But the case would be different when, with only one other Apostle, Judas went forth at the command of Jesus. Who his companion was we are not told; but whoever he might have been, he detected not the spirit of his fellow-labourer. What wonderful control Judas must have possessed over himself! What a perfect actor he was! We picture him to ourselves with a downcast, repulsive countenance, betraying the character of the man. But how seldom could his face have worn the expression natural to it! It must have been animated with a look of zeal and fervour as he preached the Gospel. That expression would need to be exchanged for one of pity and sympathy as he gazed upon the sick who were brought to him. No weariness of the subject dare he show when his fellow-traveller sought to lighten their tedious journeyings with sweet converse about Jesus.

The first time we read of Judas betraying his avarice was when, at Bethany, Mary, the sister of Lazarus, took “a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair, and the house was

filled with the odour of the ointment.”¹ The heartless, miserly, and short-sighted Judas could see no possible use in such waste, as he considered it; and he expressed his disapproval of the act. Why? Because, instead of the ointment being poured upon his Master’s feet, it might, he said, have been sold for three hundred pence, (between nine and ten pounds of our money,) and given to the poor. “This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.”² Jesus at once vindicated Mary. “Let her alone,” said he; “against the day of my burying hath she kept this.”³ He alluded to the eastern custom of embalming the dead bodies of great persons with odours and sweet perfumes, and appreciated the honour which Mary accounted him, as her Lord and King, worthy of.

The hour was now at hand when Judas would consummate his villany by an act that has for ever branded him as the most reprobate of men. Our Saviour, upon various occasions during the last year of his life, discouraged in his disciples the notion that his kingdom would be an earthly one. As the time drew nigh that he must leave them, he spoke more distinctly of his sufferings and death; but still they could not altogether divest

¹ John xii. 3.² John xii. 6.³ John xii. 7.

themselves of the idea that, as a temporal monarch, Christ would reign. When Judas abandoned this hope we know not ; but we can readily suppose he clung to it as long as possible, for with it would perish almost all he had staked his life and soul for. Oh, what a wretched man he must have been as the truth forced itself upon him that the followers of Jesus would not have their reward in this world ! Surely he must have experienced to the full what St Paul said, " If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."¹ We can imagine him leaving the supper table of Simon full of malice and rage, and ready for any course of action which the evil one might suggest. Perhaps his hopes would be again raised a little when, the next morning, he saw the multitude bearing branches of palm trees, and coming to meet Jesus in order that they might conduct him in triumph to Jerusalem ; and perhaps he shouted as loudly as the rest, " Hosanna to the Son of David : Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord : Hosanna in the highest."² We can picture to ourselves his disappointment when, instead of seeing Jesus enter the city as a triumphant monarch, he beheld him weeping over it, and foretelling its destruction. When the multitude who conducted Jesus into Jerusalem

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 19.² Matt. xxi. 9.

dispersed we are not told, but at eventide of the same day our Saviour, accompanied only by the twelve, returned to the quiet village of Bethany. The next day he again went to Jerusalem with his disciples, but no multitude met them to raise once more the hopes of Judas. Perhaps the traitor felt a little encouraged when he saw his Master exercising his authority in the temple. No small degree of excitement, we may be sure, was produced when the traders, for the second time, fled at the command of Jesus. What (might not Judas argue within himself) was Herod, with his men of war, or Pilate? What were the priests, scribes, and Pharisees? Were they more than men? Could not Jesus, if he chose, awe them likewise into submission? Why did not Jesus go straight from the temple to the palace, and, after driving out Herod, the courtiers, and the soldiers, take possession of the throne itself? If such were the thoughts of Judas, he was doomed to disappointment. The day passed away, and evening again found our Saviour and the twelve lodging in the humble village of Bethany. Perhaps in this quiet retreat the traitor matured his plans. It was now evident to him that Jesus did not intend to become a King in Jerusalem, so he must quit his service for a more profitable one. Well would it have been for him if he had done so, and, for fear of

the Jews, had fled to Bethabara—anywhere far away from Jerusalem, even if he had taken the bag with him. He might in time have repented, and become a true disciple, but the demon lust hurried him to destruction.

The chief priests, the scribes, and the elders, became so alarmed at the increasing popularity of Jesus, that they resolved, if they could seize upon him, to put him to death. Where was the difficulty? Day after day Jesus walked openly through the most public parts of Jerusalem, with only his twelve attendants, and evening after evening, he, and his small company of followers, might have been seen slowly wending their way over Olivet to their temporary home. The difficulty was that they feared a rescue might be attempted before their victim was completely in their power. The raising of Lazarus, a short time previously, had created a great sensation in the city, and many, in consequence of this miracle, believed on Jesus, and numbers flocked to Bethany to see him who had been restored to life. Craftily, then, must Christ's enemies set to work, and they met in the house of Caiaphas to consult how best to accomplish their purpose. Their relief must have been great when Judas appeared, and made the vile proposition that he would, for a sum of money, deliver his Master to them. No ex-

planation can be given as to how it was that Judas was so infatuated as to suppose that he could deliver up Jesus without his own consent. Proof after proof had he of the divine power of the Saviour. Was it more difficult for Jesus to avoid the snares Judas set than it was for him to escape out of the hands of the Jews when they sought to stone him, or from the cruel Nazarenes when they were about to cast him headlong down the precipice? Perhaps Judas may have thought that Jesus could, if he chose, rescue himself out of the hands of his enemies after he was betrayed, but the traitor would not be answerable to his employers for that. He only agreed to place Jesus in their power. What followed was their concern, not his.

Small, indeed, was the sum offered to Judas ; but, though he would willingly have had more, he agreed for thirty pieces of silver* (less than four pounds sterling) to commit the diabolical act. Well might Jesus say, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?"¹ Even the evil-minded members of the council must have loathed the base wretch before them as they made their compact with him. Judas returned to Jesus

* Thirty pieces of silver, or thirty shekels, was the price to be paid for a slave or servant when killed by a beast.

¹ John vi. 70.

without any change in his manner and appearance, and the eleven suspected nothing wrong. There is no reason to suppose that our Saviour did not that night sleep as usual in Bethany. The Apostles would accompany him from Jerusalem. Was Judas so hardened that he felt no compunction of conscience as he walked by the side of his gentle Master, who had spent the day, as was his wont, in doing good? Was he so composed that he could join the party at the evening meal; and did he dare, with the rest, to seek Christ's blessing before they parted for the night? Alas! his heart was steeled against every feeling of humanity.

The next day began the feast of the Passover. No less busy was Judas than the rest in preparing for it, and no less anxious did he appear to receive it. In the evening, "When the hour was come, he (Jesus) sat down, and the twelve Apostles with him."¹ Did not Judas start and change colour when Jesus said, "Behold the hand of him who betrayeth me is with me on the table. And truly the Son of man goeth as it was determined; but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed."² No, his self-possession did not even then forsake him, for the disciples, who were very sorrowful, "began to inquire among themselves which of

¹ Luke xxii. 14.

² Luke xxii. 21, 22.

them it was that should do this thing.”¹ Not one of the eleven suspected that either of his companions was capable of such villany ; so each, knowing the deceitfulness of his *own* heart, asked, “Is it I?”² Judas, the vile hypocrite, looked as sorrowful as any one, and, like the rest, said, “Master, is it I?”³ Oh, the forbearance of the blessed Jesus ! So lately he had made a scourge of small cords, and had driven the traders out of the temple in his zeal for the honour of his Father ; now, that all might be fulfilled concerning him, he meekly allowed his treacherous servant to complete his hellish plot. How would the eleven have acted if the traitor’s heart had been suddenly laid bare to them ? Would not the impetuous Peter, the fiery sons of Zebedee, the guileless Bartholomew, the zealous Simeon, and all the rest, have risen in a body, and spurned “the son of perdition”⁴ from the table ? Indeed, I think Peter would have drawn his sword, and slain him on the spot ; but they did not suspect him. They could not have comprehended how matters stood, for when, upon Judas preparing to leave the room, our Saviour said to him, “That thou doest, do quickly,”⁵ “No man at the table knew for what intent he spake

¹ Luke xxii. 23. ² Mark xiv. 19. ³ Matt. xxvi. 25.

⁴ John xvii. 12. ⁵ John xiii. 27.

this unto him. For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things we have need of against the feast, or that he should give something to the poor.”¹

The sad story of the betrayal you are all familiar with. It was night when Judas left the quiet chamber, and went to his employers to make the necessary arrangements for carrying out the infamous conspiracy. After he had gone, Jesus had much to say to his faithful disciples, and it must have been late when he and the eleven crossed the brook Cedron, and entered Gethsemane. He took Peter, James, and John with him into the garden. How or where the others rested, it matters little, but most probably the cold ground was their only bed. In the meantime Judas had received a band of men from the chief priests and Pharisees, and he fixed upon the signal that should be given. “Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he : hold him fast ;”² and, after that, he led the way to Gethsemane.

Long before the morning dawned, the disciples were awoke, not by the gentle voice of Jesus, but by the tramp of a multitude. Conscious of danger when they closed their eyes, how soon would

¹ John xiii. 28, 29.

² Matt. xxvi. 48.

they start to their feet ! What did they behold ? Armed soldiers and a fierce and excited mob, headed by one of the twelve, entering the garden. How, in the first moments of consternation and horror, they acted, must be left to the imagination to depict ; but they did not at once take to flight. They must have hurried to the place where they had left their Master with Peter, James, and John, for they were doubtless near Jesus when he, with calm dignity, went forth to meet his enemies. Did not those who sent an armed force to overcome twelve wearied men, prove that they knew he was no ordinary person they wished to capture ? Foolish priests and elders ! as if your few paltry soldiers had power to withstand the Lord Jesus and the legions of angels he had at his command. Your restless evil spirits would not suffer you to wait till your innocent victim was brought to you, so you must needs follow your servants to Gethsemane ; and what thought you when you saw your brave men with their faces to the ground before the meek and lowly Jesus ? The dastardly Judas well performed his part in the tragedy. Carefully, in the flickering torchlight, he guided his feet, so lately washed by his divine Master, to the spot where Jesus awaited him. Stepping out suddenly into their presence, the Saviour stood before his

enemies, and calmly said, "Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground."¹ They soon, however, recovered themselves. "Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? and they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he; if, therefore, ye seek me, let these go their way."² Oh, the never-failing love of Jesus for his chosen ones! "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end."³ He placed himself a willing captive in the hands of his enemies, but capitulated that the terrified disciples be allowed to escape. The traitor stood with those to whom our Lord said, "Whom seek ye?" With them he went backward and fell to the ground, and with them he speedily regained his standing position. There was evidently a hesitation among those who went to capture Jesus. Who will be the first to lay hands on the innocent One? seemed to be a question with them. Judas relieved them from the difficulty. The watchword, "Hail, Master,"⁴ passed his hypo-

¹ John xviii. 4-6.² John xviii. 7, 8.³ John xiii. 1.⁴ Matt. xxvi. 49.

critical lips, and then the deadly compact was completed with a kiss. Our Lord accepted the betrayer's salutation, yea, he did more, he said, "Friend, wherefore art thou come?"¹ "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?"² Jesus was arrested.

How the wretched Judas spent the remainder of that night we know not, but he most probably, after receiving in Gethsemane, from the priests, who were there present, "the reward of iniquity,"³ mingled with the crowd, and followed Jesus to the house of Annas. Like an evil spirit, we can imagine him lurking about the palace of Caiaphas, the demon remorse having possession of his soul, his base ingratitude rising before him, and every fresh insult his late Master received adding to his torture. Perhaps his heart first misgave him when he saw Jesus bound in Gethsemane, and led away to Annas, who sent Jesus, still bound, to Caiaphas. Perhaps, as a sense of his guilt forced itself upon him, and rendered him too anxious to quit the neighbourhood, he saw the patient and suffering Jesus, his arms cruelly bound with cords, and his face disfigured by blows, taken from the palace of the high priest to the judgment-hall of Pilate. The traitor may have followed him there, and then have seen him dragged from thence to the

¹ Matt. xxvi. 50.

Lukè xxii. 48.

³ Acts i. 8.

palace of Herod. "And Herod with his men of war set him (Jesus) at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate."¹ In the judgment-hall we know Judas was when Jesus was condemned. His face now wore no mask of hypocrisy ; his countenance expressed only fear and remorse. All that he possessed would he, oh how willingly, have given to be able to undo what he had done. How eagerly would he hope that Jesus might yet be saved, when he heard Pilate say to the priests and elders outside the hall, "I find in him no fault at all."² "No, nor yet Herod : for I sent you to him, and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him."³ The priests and elders would not at that season enter the judgment-hall, lest they should be defiled. Vile hypocrites ! whited sepulchres that they were. Had Judas delivered Jesus to a council of just judges, he would have seen him triumphantly conducted through the streets of Jerusalem as an innocent person who had been falsely accused. But our Saviour's judges were a tyrannical king, jealous of his throne and power, and an ambitious and proud governor. The latter, though convinced of the innocence of Jesus ; though warned by his wife's dream to have nothing to do with the matter ; and, though

Luke xxiii. 11.

² John xviii. 38.³ Luke xxiii. 15.

dreading the consequences of condemning him, yet, "willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified."¹ The traitor's cup of misery was now almost full. But he might even then have been saved; his cry for mercy would even then have been listened to by the forgiving, compassionate Saviour. But, alas! though he repented, it was only because the horrors of the position he had placed himself in forced themselves upon him. There was no hatred of sin, but only a dread of its consequences. There was no godly sorrow which "worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of; but the sorrow of the world which worketh death."² Peter, when he had denied Christ, "sorrowed after a godly sort,"³ and he was forgiven. The dying thief on the cross repented in the same manner, looked to Jesus, and was pardoned. And, though the sacred writers tell us not of it, others say that the soldier who pierced the side of Jesus afterwards believed, repented, was forgiven, and at length obtained a martyr's crown. Well would it have been for the wretched Judas if he had made his confession to the bleeding Saviour rather than to the heartless priests; he would not then have been treated with

¹ Mark xv. 15. ² 2 Cor. vii. 10. ³ 2 Cor. vii. 11.

the scorn he met with in the temple. I cannot tell you whether or not he remained to see Jesus scourged, mocked in the purple robe, pricked by the crown of thorns, beaten upon the head, and spat upon. I only know that "Judas, which had betrayed him; when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? See thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself."¹ Most valuable to the Christians was this public testimony of Judas to the perfect innocence of Christ.

It is generally believed that the traitor hung himself immediately after the crucifixion. If this were the case, the miserable man would most probably, from some hiding-place at a distance, witness the awful sight. No wonder that, when he saw the Lord Jesus expiring on the cross, his load of hopeless misery was greater than he could bear; and no marvel if, when he felt the earthquake and saw the sun darkened, he thought the vengeance of God was about to overtake him. Terror and despair drove him to the act which opened for him the gates of hell.

¹ Matt. xxvii. 3-5.

There was one spot near Jerusalem that for ages had been regarded with abhorrence, both by Jew and Gentile. I mean the Valley of the Sons of Hinnom.

“And black Gehenna called, the type of hell.”

More than six hundred years before Christ appeared on earth, Josiah had defiled this valley by ordering the carcasses that were refused burial, and every description of disgusting matter, to be thrown into it, because in it the Canaanites, and afterwards the Israelites, had rendered the place abominable by offering human sacrifices—even their own children—to the god Moloch. This deity was a brazen image sitting on a throne of brass, having the head of a calf and the body of a man. The arms were extended, as if ready to embrace any one. When a child was to be sacrificed, the image was, by a fire inside, made burning hot. The innocent victim was then placed in the idol's arms, and was soon consumed, its shrieks of agony being drowned by the noise of drums beaten near the spot. Another name for the Valley of Hinnom was Tophet,—toph, in Hebrew, meaning a drum. Even in our Saviour's time, fires were kept continually burning in the valley, to consume the filth of the city; and, to use the words of a modern writer, “The heavy volumes of smoke rolling

along the rocks, and broken only by the flames, which glared redly through it, gave an unspeakable horror to the scene." * Jesus, in the passage, "Whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell (Gehenna) fire,"¹ alluded to this fearful place. From one part of the valley rose a precipitous rock, on the top of which was a flat piece of ground, called *Aceldama*, or the field of blood. To this melancholy spot Judas, it is said, fled after the crucifixion. Surely for the very demon of despair he might have been mistaken as he stood at the edge of the precipice. Whenever a flame shot up from below, what a ghastly face would be revealed. A skilful painter it would require to depict all the passions that would be portrayed in that diabolical countenance. Hatred, terror, malice, remorse ; all would combine to form a portrait of one whose "own place" was among the fallen angels. Did any human being see the wretched suicide perform that last act which for ever shut him out from all hope of mercy? Possibly so. Six of the Apostles, we are told, concealed themselves in a cave after they fled from Gethsemane. This cavern was near *Aceldama*. It is not improbable that these Apostles could, as having been eye-witnesses, describe the fate of Judas. St Matthew tells us that the traitor

* Dr Stebbing.

¹ Matt. v. 22.

hanged himself, and Peter says that "falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out."¹ It is more than likely that it was near the edge of the precipice that Judas hanged himself, and, the rope breaking, he fell over the rock, and was dashed to pieces. It matters not whether the mutilated corpse rested on a projecting ledge of rock, out of the reach of the flames, and served as a meal for the birds of prey, or fell into the fire below, and was consumed. In either case, ere the next morning dawned, a fragment of rope dangling from the branch of a tree, and perhaps a few bones, would be all that remained to tell the fate of the traitor. And where was his never-dying soul? The devil claimed that; and Judas went "to his own place"² there in eternal torments, to bewail his perfidy to the Son of God.

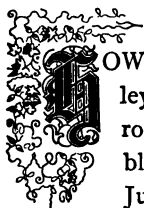
¹ Acts i. 18.

² Acts i. 25.

SAINT MATTHIAS.

COLLECT FOR SAINT MATTHIAS'S DAY.

O ALMIGHTY GOD, who into the place of the traitor Judas didst choose thy faithful servant Matthias to be of the number of the twelve Apostles : Grant that thy Church, being alway preserved from false Apostles, may be ordered and guided by faithful and true pastors ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



NOW willingly do we quit the dark Valley of Hinnom for the cheerful upper-room in Jerusalem, where we find the blessed and holy man who succeeded Judas in his office. We read that, after the ascension, a number of believers were assembled in this room for prayer and supplication. The congregation consisted of the eleven Apostles, the Virgin Mary, the holy women who had followed Jesus from Galilee, and about one hundred others, the majority of whom probably were the seventy disciples. "And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of the names together were about an hundred and

twenty,) Men and brethren, this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of David, spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and, falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue *Aceldama*, that is to say, *The field of blood*. For it is written in the Book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishopric let another take. Wherefore of these men which have accompanied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection. And they appointed two, Joseph called *Barsabas*, who was surnamed *Justus*, and *Matthias*." ¹

This is the first time *Matthias* is mentioned by name, and yet it seems he was one of the earliest disciples, having attended upon the ministry of the Lord Jesus from the period of his baptism.

¹ Acts i. 15-23.

Probably Matthias had often listened to the preacher in the wilderness of Judæa, and was prepared to welcome the Messiah when he appeared on the banks of the Jordan. From that hour till the crucifixion he was one of the attendants upon our Lord. A faithful follower to the last was Matthias. He was selected as one who could bear testimony to the resurrection of Jesus, he must therefore have been a witness of his death. Doubtless he formed part of that great company who followed our Saviour to Calvary. Unlike the Apostles, no self-reproach would be mingled with his sorrow. Of him it could not be said that in the hour of danger he had forsaken Jesus and fled. Love, devotion, grief, and fear, would alone fill his breast. How would each circumstance connected with the last scene of our Lord's life be engraven on his heart! The nailing to the cross, the division of the Saviour's hallowed garments among four soldiers, and the casting of lots for his coat. The fastening of the superscription over the sacred head, the prayer of the ever-loving Jesus for his murderers, the jeers of the passers-by, and the taunts of the soldiers and of the hardened thief. The pardon of the penitent thief, the thoughtful care, in the midst of his agony, of Jesus for his mother, the three hours of supernatural darkness, and the despairing cry at the ninth hour, "My God,

my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"¹ The sudden dispelling of the darkness, and the renewed taunts of the soldiers as soon as they were relieved from the terrible suspense they must have been in during the time the sun hid his light. The Saviour's thirst quenched with vinegar. The blessed words, "It is finished." The resigning of his spirit into his Father's hands, and the last loud cry when the broken heart * ceased to beat. All these events would Matthias note as, with the other acquaintances of Jesus, he stood watching while

"Told the long hours of death, as, one by one,
The life-strings of that tender heart gave way."

Whether or not the risen Lord favoured Matthias with a special interview to prepare him for the high position he intended him to fill, I cannot say, but

¹ Matt. xxvii. 46.

* It is the opinion of some learned men that the physical cause of Christ's death was a broken heart. Many arguments favour this conclusion. As a rule, those who suffered death on the cross, lingered three days, and the earliest church writers say that no instance was ever known of a person dying of crucifixion alone in six hours. Physicians can prove that intense emotion has been known to produce rupture of the heart, and that the flow of blood and water from the side of Jesus when the soldier pierced it, was the natural consequence of a ruptured heart. One of the symptoms indicating the approach of death from a ruptured or a broken heart is a piercing shriek. "Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost," (Matt. xxvii. 50.) If the words, "They pierced my hands and my feet," (Ps.

certain it is that Matthias did see Jesus after the resurrection, and could bear witness that he rose from the dead.

The eleven did not presume to elect an Apostle to fill the vacant place in their number, caused by the death of Judas, but chose two men, either of whom could be a witness of the doctrines, miracles, and resurrection of Christ, and then referred the matter to the Lord Jesus himself. They cast lots, at the same time solemnly praying that the Lord, who knew the hearts of men, would show which of the two he had chosen. It was customary among the Jews in any doubtful case, particularly when selecting judges and magistrates, to have the matter decided by casting lots. The practice was instituted by God's command, and we frequently read of it in the Bible. He told Moses that the inheritance of the children of Israel must be "divided by lot."¹ Joshua, the servant of the Lord, also directed that the land of Canaan should be "divided by lot."² The sons of Aaron were divided "by lot"³ into four and twenty orders.

xxii. 16;) "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture," (Ps. xxii, 18;) "They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink," (Ps. lxix. 21,) are to be taken as literally referring to Christ, why not regard the words, "Reproach hath broken my heart," (Ps. lxix. 20,) as literally referring to him also?

¹ Num. xxvi. 55. ² Joshua xiii. 6. ³ 1 Chron. xxiv. 5.

And the singers for the temple were likewise divided by lot into four and twenty orders.* Many other instances might be given where important matters were thus determined. We do not now cast lots, but well would it be if we, as Moses, Joshua, and the Apostles did, trusted to the Lord's guidance in all our affairs.

"And the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven Apostles."¹ Well trained had the new Apostle been for the mighty work before him. During the past three years, though he had not, like his companions, enjoyed in private the society of Jesus, he had been intimately associated with him. Many divine precepts had he received from the lips of the Lord himself, and many wonderful miracles had he seen performed by him. He had, under the direction of Jesus, gone forth with one companion (Matthias is believed to have been one of the seventy) to preach the Gospel, and heal the sick, and had returned to his Master rejoicing, and saying, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name."² Ah! little thought the haughty rulers of the cities Matthias and his fellow-labourer entered, that if they exercised their authority against the two meanly-clad missionaries who, in their streets, were teaching the people, it would

¹ Acts i. 26.

² Luke x. 17.

be more tolerable for the inhabitants of Sodom in the day of judgment than for them. There is no list of the seventy handed down to us, but ere long we shall know who they were, for our Saviour said their "names are written in heaven."¹

Soon after the election of Matthias to the Apostleship, "when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."² The cloven tongues of fire are supposed to have been, in the first instance, one flame, which descended from heaven, and naturally assumed the shape of a tongue. This flame became divided or cloven into many tongues of fire, one of which rested upon each of the Apostles.

Matthias, like the rest, when he had received the gift of the Holy Ghost, at once began his work. After his election he is not individually mentioned in the Holy Scriptures, but we know that, with great power, he gave "witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus,"³ and that, "by the hands

¹ Luke x. 20.² Acts ii. 1-4.³ Acts iv. 33.

of the Apostles, were many signs and wonders wrought among the people.”¹ And that “daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.”² In different parts of Judæa, Matthias first laboured, and with marked success. He then, it is said, travelled eastward, his residence being, according to Jerome, in Cappadocia. Here he preached the Gospel, and was instrumental in bringing many from heathenism to the knowledge of Jesus; but the people were very cruel and barbarous, and those who did not believe seized upon the devoted Apostle and put him to death, but by what mode is not certain.

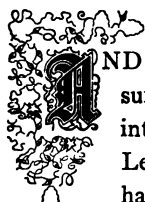
¹ Acts v. 12.

² Acts v. 42.

SAINT BARNABAS.

COLLECT FOR SAINT BARNABAS' DAY.

O LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, who didst endue thy holy Apostle Barnabas with singular gifts of the Holy Ghost ; Leave us not, we beseech thee, destitute of thy manifold gifts, nor yet of gr^ace to use them always to thy honour and glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



AND Joses, who by the Apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the Apostles' feet."¹ This is the first mention in the sacred story of Barnabas, who was afterwards selected by the Holy Ghost to be an Apostle of the Gentiles. How much of his history do the few words I have just quoted give? His name was at first Joses, but the Apostles gave him the name of Barnabas,

¹ Acts iv. 36, 37.

which means son of consolation.* This name was not conferred upon him without a reason,—a comforter, doubtless, Barnabas was both to the souls and bodies of his fellow-creatures. He preached the Gospel to perishing sinners, showing to them the way of life, at the same time devoting his property to the relief of the needy. He was born in Cyprus, a large island in the Mediterranean Sea, very beautiful, and rich in corn, oil, wine, delicious fruits, gold, silver, diamonds, emeralds, &c. In all probability the land Barnabas owned lay in his native isle, and would be very valuable. But, at the time he is introduced to us, his eyes were no longer dazzled by the gems of Cyprus; he had found the pearl of great price, and all earth's jewels had become to him worthless. He had discovered a new country, and there he would lay up his treasures. The text also tells us that Barnabas was a Levite, consequently he must have been a Jew, though, like St Paul, a native of a Gentile country. His ancestors, it is supposed, had left Judæa in troublesome times, and had settled in Cyprus.

How long Barnabas had been a follower of

* Some modern critics suggest that the Greek words should be translated "son of prophecy," or "exhortation." But the authorized version gives "son of consolation." The Greek will bear either rendering.

Christ we are not told in the Bible, but Eusebius says he was one of the Seventy. If so, he must have been selected for the ministry by the blessed Saviour himself when he was upon the earth. Perhaps, like Matthias, Barnabas had been with the Apostles all the time the Lord Jesus went in and out among them, and he most probably witnessed the last scene when his divine Master gave himself a ransom for all. Most likely he was one of the five hundred brethren who saw the risen Lord by special appointment, and, after Jesus had ascended into heaven, formed part of the congregation of believers who assembled in the upper room in Jerusalem. We may suppose that he was one of the company who welcomed Peter and John when they were released from their first imprisonment, and that his voice joined with the rest in praise and prayer upon the deliverance of the two Apostles. For two years we hear nothing more of Barnabas, but, doubtless, he whom the inspired writer thought worthy of such special notice when he first mentioned him, took a conspicuous part in the acts of the Apostles during his stay in Jerusalem. He was probably one of those who selected the seven deacons, and, perhaps, was one of the devout men who carried the martyr Stephen to his burial.

Deeply interesting is the scene in which Barnabas next appears. A weary, travel-stained pilgrim had arrived at Jerusalem. No friend welcomed him, or offered him shelter; every face he met expressed either indifference, coldness, hatred, or fear. The son of consolation, however, heard and believed the wondrous tale of Saul of Tarsus, (for the poor outcast was none other than he,) and took "him to the Apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus."¹ Metaphrastes says that Barnabas was a pupil of Gamaliel at the same time Saul of Tarsus was, and that the two future Apostles were instructed together. But of this there is no intimation in the New Testament. Not long did Paul remain in Jerusalem after Barnabas had taken him to the Apostles. He went to his native city, where he continued three or four years, during which time the door of Christ's kingdom was thrown open to the Gentiles, and Cornelius and his household, the first Gentile converts, were baptized.

You will remember how, before Paul was converted, the poor Christians were persecuted. Stephen was put to death, and many, very many of

¹ Acts ix. 27.

the believers, fled from Jerusalem far away to escape from their enemies. Some went to Damascus, some to Antioch, others to Phenice, and others to Cyprus. Indeed, they were scattered abroad in every direction. Great good arose to the Gospel in consequence of this dispersion of Christ's flock, for the exiles went about in distant countries preaching the Lord Jesus. In the midst of this persecution, Saul of Tarsus was converted, after which the Churches had "rest throughout all Judæa, and Galilee, and Samaria."¹ Many of the Christians who had been driven from the holy land did not return to it, but continued in the countries which had afforded them shelter from their enemies. While the believers were preaching in distant lands to Jews only, the news reached the converts of Cyprus and Cyrene (the latter was a magnificent city in Africa) that Peter was by divine authority teaching and baptizing the Gentiles. They without hesitation followed his example. They went to Antioch, the Syrian capital, where they began their labours, "and the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord."² The hand of the Lord being with them, means that they were enabled to perform miracles. "Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the Church

¹ Acts ix. 31.² Acts xi. 21.

which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch. Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.”¹ Barnabas rejoiced when he saw undoubted signs of the happy effects of God’s grace in the lives of the Gentile converts in Antioch. But still he knew there was one great evil to be guarded against. Perhaps he had heard from the divine lips of Jesus the parable of the sower, and knew how possible it was that many who heard the word and received it with gladness might have no root in themselves, and would, if they trusted only to their own strength, endure but for a time, and when persecution arose fall away. He therefore exhorted the converts to cleave unto the Lord with purpose of heart, that they might be among those who, having heard the word, keep it and bring forth fruit with patience. “For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.”² This was the honourable character the Spirit of God gave of Barnabas, “He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith;” and the result of such an addition to the Christian labourers in Antioch was what might have been

¹ Acts xi. 22, 23.² Acts xi. 24.

expected. Barnabas soon found his charge growing too large for him to direct single-handed, so he went to Tarsus to fetch Saul, who returned with him to the Syrian capital, "and it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the Church, and taught much people."¹

About this time a famine was predicted, which would be particularly felt in Judæa. The Christians, owing to their extreme poverty, would be the greatest sufferers from this calamity. Some of them it appears had the gift of prophecy, so a few of these prophets, among whom was Agabus, went from Jerusalem to Antioch to tell the disciples there what was about to befall Judæa. At once the converts in Antioch resolved to help their suffering brethren, which they did by sending contributions to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul. Oh how the harassed disciples in Jerusalem needed the presence of such men to comfort them! Persecution had broken the rest the Church had for some time enjoyed. Which of the Apostles welcomed Paul and Barnabas I cannot say. Peter and James the Less we know were in the city, and perhaps James the son of Zebedee greeted them with a holy kiss. But "about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the Church. And he

¹ Acts xi. 25.

killed James the brother of John with the sword.”¹ Peter was soon seized upon, and was thrown into a dungeon, there (so Herod designed) to lay till after Easter, when he would be brought forth to share the fate of James. How the king’s intentions were frustrated you know. Peter, when the angel left him, went “to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark ; where many were gathered together praying.”² This Mary was sister to Barnabas, so he and Paul were in all probability among the sorrowing friends who were gathered together praying. Indeed, what was more natural than that Mary should entertain her brother and his companion during their stay in Jerusalem? Too soon was this good woman called upon to part with her brother, and a double trial was hers. Her beloved son Mark determined to accompany his uncle to Antioch. Little could Mary hope to see either of them again in this world—persecution, war, and famine rendering life at that time most precarious. “And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministry, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark.”³

“Now there were in the Church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers ; as Barnabas, and Simeon, that was called Niger, and Lucius

¹ Acts xii. 1, 2.

² Acts xii. 12.

³ Acts xii. 25.

of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.”¹ Niger means black, so the Simeon mentioned as one of the prophets is supposed to have been an African, and some have surmised that he was the Simon, a Cyrenean, who was compelled to bear the cross after Jesus. Lucius, a relative of St Paul, was also an African. Manaen was foster-brother to Herod Antipas, and is thought to have been converted by the preaching of John the Baptist. He was brought up with Herod, but, like Moses, he chose “rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.”² These prophets and teachers were ministering to the Lord and fasting—engaged, it would appear, in their ordinary public worship—when “the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.”³ From this time, though not of the number of the twelve, Barnabas and Paul enjoyed the title and dignity of Apostles. “So they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.”⁴ Seleucia, which was about fifteen miles from Antioch, was

¹ Acts xiii. 1.² Heb. xi. 25.³ Acts xiii. 2, 3.⁴ Acts xiii. 4.

a large Syrian seaport on the Mediterranean, near where the Orontes falls into it. Here the missionaries embarked for Cyprus, and after a sail of one hundred miles, landed at Salamis, (now Famagusta.) Oh, what emotions would fill the breast of Barnabas as he touched his native shores. Alas ! grief would be the predominant feeling ; for his fellow-countrymen, whose welfare he had so dearly at heart, were mostly idolaters, immoral, and plunged in all manner of luxury. How would he long to lead them to a knowledge of the true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. After preaching for a while at Salamis, with what success we are not told, the three crossed over the island to Paphos, another large city, in which was the temple of the goddess Venus, whom the Cyprians worshipped. The false deity of Cyprus was not an image of a beautiful woman, as the sculptors of the present day represent the fabled queen of love, but a strange mysterious figure, resembling a white pyramid. Among those who felt the utter inability of Venus to satisfy the cravings of the human soul, was the governor Sergius Paulus, who resided at Paphos. He was, we read, a prudent man, and he called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God. There was, however, one member of the governor's household who knew that if his master embraced

the Christian faith, his power and influence at court would be at an end. This was a false prophet, a sorcerer, but not a worshipper of Venus, for he was a Jew ; his name was Bar-Jesus. Fain would Elymas the sorcerer, for so was his name by interpretation, have prevented the Apostles entering the palace ; but he was unable to do this, so he withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. "Saul, filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, and said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord ? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness ; and he went about seeking some one to lead him by the hand."¹ The result of this miracle was, that the governor became a Christian.

From Paphos, Paul, Barnabas, and Mark sailed to Perga in Pamphylia, where the last left his companions and returned to Jerusalem. What excuse he made for leaving his friends, with whom he had travelled in the capacity of minister or assistant, we know not. It might have been fatigue, or possibly fear of the dangers they were about to

¹ Acts xiii. 9-11.

encounter, or perhaps his zeal waxed cold. Whatever were his motives, Paul and Barnabas were much grieved at his conduct. The two Apostles went farther north, and came to Antioch,* in Pisidia. There, on the Sabbath-day, they entered the synagogue, and sat down. They were observed ; and, when the law and the prophets had been read, the rulers of the synagogue sent a messenger to invite the two strangers to exhort the people. Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand, the mode he generally adopted to enforce silence, said, "Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience."¹ His interesting and eloquent address you will find in the thirteenth chapter of the Acts. When he had ceased speaking, the Jews left the synagogue ; but the Gentiles, who had been deeply impressed, besought Paul to preach to them again the next Sabbath. A week passed away, (during which, we may readily suppose, the Apostles were not idle,) and the Sabbath found them again in the synagogue. So powerful had been the effect in the Pisidian capital of Paul's first sermon, that almost the whole city came together to hear his second ; but the Jews

* There were no less than sixteen cities of the name of Antioch in different parts of the East.

¹ Acts xiii. 16.

were filled with envy, and began to blaspheme and contradict Paul and Barnabas, who fearlessly told them that the Lord had charged them to preach the Gospel first to the Jews, but, as they so obstinately rejected it, they must address themselves to the Gentiles. The Jews became more exasperated, and "raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium,"¹ the capital of Lycaonia, a kingdom near Pisidia. There, with great success at first, they taught in the synagogue ; but some malicious Jews stirred up the people against them, and, as they were in danger of being stoned, they fled to Lystra : "And there they preached the gospel."² Among their listeners was a poor man who had been lame from his birth. Utterly useless his limbs must have been, for we read that he never had walked. No doubt, like the cripple who sat at the gate of the temple called Beautiful, the poor man at Lystra sat and asked alms of the passers-by. He did not escape the observation of the Apostles, and Paul "steadfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed, said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked. And when the people saw what Paul had done,

¹ Acts xiii. 50, 51.² Acts xiv. 7.

they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter ; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker. Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people.”¹ The Apostles, in great grief, rent their clothes, and, running among the people, told them that they were only men like themselves, and that their object in preaching to them was that they might turn from such vain idolatry, and serve “the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein.”² With the greatest difficulty the people were prevented paying divine honours to them ; but how soon was all changed ! The spiteful Jews of Antioch and Iconium followed the Apostles to Lystra, and soon persuaded the fickle multitude to persecute the devoted missionaries. They cruelly stoned Paul, and then dragged him out of the city, believing him to be dead. The Christians assembled around the bruised and bleeding Apostle. We can picture to ourselves the grief of Barnabas, when he saw the mighty Paul, his beloved fellow-labourer, apparently dying. Suddenly animation was restored, and “Paul rose up, and came into the city : and the

¹ Acts xiv. 9-13.² Acts xiv. 15.

next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.”¹ Marvellous must have been Paul’s recovery, or he could not so soon have set out on a journey of about twenty miles, part of which was over an immense mountain, called the Black Mountain, which separated Lystra from Derbe.

The more we read of these good men, the more we must be struck with their courage, love, and patience ; for after Paul and Barnabas had preached in Derbe, they, notwithstanding the ill-usage they had met with, returned again to Lystra and Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith. After preaching again in Perga, they went to Attalia, from which port they sailed for Antioch. Upon arriving at the Syrian capital, they told all that God had done with them, “and there they abode long time with the disciples.”²

How Paul and Barnabas went up to Jerusalem to consult the Church there about the dissension touching circumcision you have read in the life of James the Less. The two Apostles returned to Antioch, where they must ere long have been joined by Peter, who there justly incurred the displeasure of Paul by his lamentable weakness in separating himself from the Gentile converts. His example was followed by other Jews, “insomuch

¹ Acts xiv. 20.² Acts xiv. 28.

that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation."¹ Paul alone remained firm, and doubtless he severely rebuked Barnabas, as he did Peter ; but no estrangement then took place between him and Barnabas, for shortly afterwards, when Paul wished to take his second missionary journey, he invited Barnabas to accompany him. "Let us," said he, "go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do."² Paul's confidence in his brother Apostle was therefore evidently fully restored. But a new difficulty arose. Mark had again joined his uncle, who determined to take him with them. But Paul had not forgotten how soon Mark had before tired of the work, so he refused to allow him to accompany them. Barnabas no doubt believed that, though Mark had a few years before showed a want of zeal and resolution, he could now depend upon his courage, energy, and devotion. Paul, however, was firm in his opinion that Mark must be left behind, and Barnabas was equally resolved not to be separated from his kinsman. "And the contention was so sharp between them, that they separated asunder one from the other : and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus."³ Perhaps not in bitterness did the two Apostles part ; a reconciliation

¹ Gal. ii. 13.² Acts xv. 36.³ Acts xv. 39.

might have taken place before Barnabas and Mark left Antioch for Seleucia, and Paul and Silas turned their steps towards Cilicia. No ill-feeling could long rankle in the breasts of these devoted self-denying men. As joint soldiers of the cross, how many dangers had they mutually shared! Had they not been together in perils by robbers, in perils by the heathen, in perils by their own countrymen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, "in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness"?¹ We cannot suppose that no kind farewell was exchanged when they parted each on his mission of love, perhaps to meet no more in this world.

In the sacred writings we hear nothing more of Barnabas after his arrival in Cyprus beyond the mention of him by St Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians, which was written several years subsequent to the separation of the two friends: "Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working?"² From this passage it is evident that Barnabas was at that time labouring as an Apostle of Jesus. Any traditional account of him is so very uncertain that it is of little value. It is probable that he confined his ministry to Cyprus and the neighbouring parts of Lesser Asia

¹ 2 Cor. xi. 27.² 1 Cor. ix. 6.

and Judæa. An ancient writer says that he was by some malicious Jews shut up in a synagogue in Salamis, and there stoned; but neither Eusebius nor Jerome, who both wrote concerning Barnabas, mentions this. It has also been said that Mark was with him when he was stoned, and received from the dying lips of his uncle a request to go without delay and join Paul.

Whatever suffering Barnabas endured for Christ's sake, this one comfort remained to gladden his heart, the constancy of his beloved nephew, whom Paul himself afterwards found a valuable help. Not even Nero, with his deadly engines of torture, could terrify the once timid Evangelist. He was with Paul a prisoner in Rome, and through the great Apostle sent his salutation to the Church at Colosse, and afterwards to Philemon. And when the aged Paul had nearly finished his course, his wish expressed to Timothy was that Mark should hasten to him; "for," said he, "he is profitable to me for the ministry."¹

"Companion of the saints! 'twas thine
To taste that drop of peace divine,
When the great soldier of thy Lord
Call'd thee to take his last farewell,
Teaching the Church with joy to tell
The story of your love restored."

No genuine writings of Barnabas have been

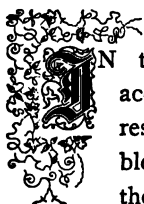
¹ 2 Tim. iv. 11.

handed down to us. There is, however, a work still in existence called "The Epistle of Barnabas," which was believed by many learned men to have been penned by that Apostle. But it is now almost generally considered a work of the second century, and therefore written many years after its reputed author had ended his labours.

SAINT PAUL.

THE COLLECT.

O GOD, who through the preaching of the blessed Apostle Saint Paul, hast caused the light of the Gospel to shine throughout the world: Grant, we beseech thee, that we, having his wonderful conversion in remembrance, may shew forth our thankfulness unto thee for the same, by following the holy doctrine which he taught; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



IN the New Testament we read the account of the life, of the death, of the resurrection, and of the ascension of our blessed Saviour; also of the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, and of their first labours, before Saul of Tarsus is mentioned. And how is he introduced to us? As a violent persecutor of the followers of Christ, assisting the murderers of Stephen in their bloody work. Saul himself tells us that he was "consenting unto his (Stephen's) death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him."¹ Who was Saul? Let Saul himself answer the question: "I am verily a man

¹ Acts xxii. 20.

which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia."¹ It was no mean city then that Saul boasted as his birthplace—famed as Tarsus was for its learning, magnificence, and the beauty of its position. There he spent his youthful days. Amidst the heights of Taurus, and by the fall of the Cydnus, how often had the young Cilician wandered, gazing upon scenes full to him of associations that roused every feeling of ambition in his ardent bosom. Often would he tread the battle-fields of Alexander and Cæsar ; and how often, as he gazed upon the broad Cydnus, would he think of that gorgeous pageant of beauty and luxury, when Cleopatra sailed up the river to meet Antony at Tarsus. Saul did, at length, become a soldier, but not under any earthly commander, and obtained conquests far greater than did ever Alexander.

He was not an only child ; possibly his parents had many sons and daughters, but of one dear sister alone we read, whose son, in after years was the instrument of saving his uncle's life. The father of Saul was a Jew, a true descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. - Why he left the land of his fathers we know not : but, in his foreign home, he continued a strict Pharisee, and, doubtless, an honest one, who tried to serve God as his ancestors had done. In his own persuasion

¹ Acts xxii. 3.

he trained his son, who lived after the straitest sect of his religion, a Pharisee. The study of the Old Testament Scriptures would not, therefore, be neglected in the education of Saul. The young Jew was likewise taught a trade, that of tent-making, according to the Jewish maxim, "He who teaches not his son a trade, teaches him to be a thief." But for a nobler calling was Saul destined by his parents than that of tent-making. Among the learned of their own nation, they hoped to see their son hold a high position. Tarsus boasted of possessing one of the three greatest universities in the world, and so we may suppose that, at an early age, Saul took his place among the students of his native city. Why he did not complete his education at home is a matter for conjecture, but probably the rigid Pharisee dreaded the influence unbelieving Gentile youths might exercise over the mind of his son, and so sent him to Jerusalem to be "taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers."¹ With what emotions would the ardent Saul gaze for the first time upon the holy city! How eagerly would each part of it be visited as the scene of some fact of sacred history! Little thought he then, that in a few years he would gaze upon many of the same spots with feelings of veneration increased tenfold, because they

¹ Acts xxii. 3.

were associated with the life and death of the Lord Jesus.

Saul's teacher was Gamaliel, a learned doctor of the law, a man of eminence, and "had in reputation among all the people."¹ He is generally believed to have been a son of the devout Simeon who took the infant Jesus in his arms in the temple. The young Cilician soon outstripped his fellow-students. He tells us himself that he made greater progress in the Jews' religion than those of his own years, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of his fathers. Gamaliel was a Pharisee, so no wonder that the fiery and active Saul grew up bigoted, narrow-minded, and utterly unable to tolerate any religious sect that differed from his own. Such was the future Apostle's state of mind when he ceased to be a pupil of Gamaliel, and, as is supposed, returned to Tarsus. Nearly four hundred miles north of Jerusalem lay his distant home. Can we not imagine the accomplished scholar pausing now and then, on his long journey, to examine places of particular beauty or interest? If he travelled by land, the famed Sea of Galilee would not be far out of his route, and as he most probably was an enthusiastic admirer of the beauties of nature, he would not deem it lost time to devote a few hours to the

¹ Acts v. 34.

contemplation of a scene of such grandeur and loveliness as the Lake at all times presented. Perhaps, as he sauntered along its banks, he saw a weather-beaten fisherman, with two intelligent-looking young men, washing their nets in the shallow water ; and not far from them another group, composed of a matron with a gentle youth, watching her husband and elder son busily preparing for their night of toil. How little would the proud and learned young Pharisee imagine that, ere many years had passed away, he and those four youths (Peter, Andrew, James, and John) would be dearly beloved brothers in Christ—united heart and soul in one cause, and willing to work and die together to promote the glory of God and the salvation of man. There is no record left as to how Saul spent the years that intervened from the time he left Gamaliel's school till he appeared as a persecutor of the followers of Jesus ; but, probably, he lived with his parents at Tarsus, perfecting himself in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, the Jewish law, and the arts and sciences.

How important in the world's history were those few years ! The blessed Redeemer had become a sacrifice for the sins of mankind, and his faithful disciples were teaching the doctrines of the cross throughout Judæa. Fondly had the chief priests, the scribes, Pharisees, and all the different sects,

hoped that, with the death of their leader, the Nazarenes, as they called the believers in Jesus, would be crushed ; but how much they were mistaken. "The word of God increased, and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly ; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."¹ The enemies of Jesus became more and more alarmed ; they no longer hesitated, and persecution was resorted to. With all the violence peculiar to his sect, Saul hated the Nazarenes. We have reason to believe that he had never seen Jesus, so that only in a perverted form did he perhaps hear the doctrines of the holy One ; and he had no opportunity of witnessing the divine graces of the Saviour, which inspired many a bigoted Jew with feelings of love, awe, and admiration. No sooner did Saul perceive that his religion was in danger, than studies, home, —all were forgotten but his zeal toward God, which made him think that he "ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth."² He scorned the idea that the son of a poor carpenter, who chose a few fishermen as his most intimate friends, should be the Messiah—the Prince of Peace, he and his forefathers had looked for.

The first martyr, you know, was Stephen, one of

¹ Acts vi. 7.

² Acts xxvi. 9.

the seven deacons appointed to take charge of the money for the relief of the poor, as well as to preach the Gospel and baptize the converts. He was a man full of faith and power, and who "did great wonders and miracles among the people."¹ In the synagogue, Stephen argued with men of different nations, among whom were Cilicians; so, perhaps Saul, who was then at Jerusalem, was one of those who disputed with him. But even the learned pupil of Gamaliel could not "resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he (Stephen) spake."² Before the Sanhedrim was the blessed martyr taken, and false witnesses were procured, who accused Stephen of speaking blasphemy against the holy place and the law. He was calm, "and all they that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel."³ Stephen's eloquent and spirited defence you will find in the seventh chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. At the close of it you read how he accused his judges of being stiff-necked and uncircumcised of heart, betrayers and murderers of the just One, who had received the law, but had not kept it. This enraged his enemies to such a degree that they gnashed upon him with their teeth. "But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw

¹ Acts vi. 8.² Acts vi. 10.³ Acts vi. 15.

the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him; and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And, when he had said this, he fell asleep."¹ "Devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him."² Where the place of his interment was we know not; perhaps the rich counsellor, Joseph, provided a tomb for the mangled remains of the martyr. A cavern is still shown in the valley of Jehoshaphat, into which it is said the murderers of Stephen dragged their victim when life was extinct. How bitterly must Saul afterwards have mourned over the share he had taken in Stephen's murder! Often, perhaps, even before his conversion, the angelic face of the martyr haunted him, and he marvelled at the courage, firmness, love, and forgiveness of the follower of One whom he regarded as an impostor.

¹ Acts vii. 55-60.² Acts viii. 2.

But whatever his thoughts were at the time of Stephen's death, his heart was not softened, for he afterwards "made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed them to prison."¹ He himself says: "And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceeding mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities."² His fury and misguided zeal were insatiable; for, having harassed the poor Christians at Jerusalem in every way, and driven them from the city, he must needs follow them as far as Damascus, in order that he might bring them bound to Jerusalem to be punished. Perhaps many of those who were assembled in the upper room after the ascension were then in prison, victims of Saul's frenzy, or had fled far away from Jerusalem. How many homes must have been made desolate by the bigoted Pharisee! How many families would only dare to worship the crucified Lord *secretly*, for fear of Saul of Tarsus! How would his name strike terror even into the hearts of the brave women who followed Jesus from Galilee to Calvary! How would the sisters of Bethany tremble for the life of their dear brother, if they saw the persecutor approaching their peaceful village!

¹ Acts viii. 3.² Acts xxvi. 11.

But it would take too long to enumerate half of the miseries Saul, in his blinded zeal, brought upon the believers.

It was about the year A.D. 35, a few months after Stephen's martyrdom, that "Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that, if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem."¹ His request was complied with; and he and a few attendants left Jerusalem for Damascus. No inclination would he feel to linger on the way; yet, eagerly would he note every group of travellers he passed, and, if his suspicions were roused, he would most probably pause to inquire the object of their journey, and not unlikely, if they proved to be followers of the crucified One, he had them seized and carried to the nearest prison, there to await his return from Damascus, when they would help to swell the number of those he hoped to lead into the council chamber to hear their doom. In a few days, his long journey of one hundred and thirty miles drew near its close. Perhaps some fugitives, who had seen him on the road, had reached Damascus before him, and had told the

¹ Acts ix. 1, 2.

believers there that the merciless Saul of Tarsus was approaching the city. If so, how would the trembling disciples seek for places of refuge wherein to lie concealed so long as the fierce persecutor remained in the Syrian capital. Possibly, from the roofs of houses here and there, anxious eyes gazed along the banks of Abana and Pharpar, to catch the first glimpse of the dreaded one! Oh, how many prayers would ascend to heaven, that God would protect his children, and not let them be delivered as prey into the hands of the destroyer!

It was mid-day when the travellers' journey was suddenly checked. They were within half-a-mile of Damascus. The burning sun was directly over their heads, and, doubtless, they looked forward with no little pleasure to procuring rest, shelter, and refreshment within the walls of the city. Even the over-zealous Saul would, probably, be thinking that he must rest awhile before presenting his letters and commencing his search for the Nazarenes, when "suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he,

trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do."¹ In a moment Saul was a Christian. He never was a hypocrite. He had believed, as he had professed, that Jesus of Nazareth was an impostor; but now, from the evidence of his own senses, he was convinced of his error. He had seen Jesus in his glorified human nature, and had conversed with him. This would have been sufficient to have checked him in his persecution of the disciples; but more than this was accomplished. The powerful voice of the Saviour had changed his heart and quickened him to spiritual life.

Saul's companions were speechless with terror; they saw the light, but nothing more, and heard not, or did not understand, what passed between the Lord Jesus and Saul. When the new convert arose from the ground he was sightless, and was led by his companions into the city. For three days he remained blind and fasting, and probably neglected by men. No sympathy now would he have with unbelievers, or they with him, and the brethren would not dare to approach him until they had some better evidence of his sudden and recent conversion than his own words. At

¹ Acts ix. 3-6.

the end of three days the Lord appeared unto a disciple, named Ananias, a very devout man, supposed to have been one of the seventy, and "said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus; for, behold, he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man, named Ananias, coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight."¹ Ananias hesitated. He knew Saul's reputation as a persecutor, also what had at that time brought him to Damascus; but the Lord told him that he was now a chosen vessel, to preach the gospel both to the Jews and Gentiles. So Ananias went to the house where Saul was, and laid his hands upon him, and told him that the Lord had sent him to him, that he might receive his sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. "And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received his sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized."² He at once joined himself to the disciples, "and straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God."³

Damascus is, even at the present day, a rich and beautiful city. In it is still the street called Straight, which is about three miles in length,

¹ Acts ix. 11, 12.² Acts ix. 18.³ Acts ix. 20.

running in a direct line across the city from east to west. Near the eastern gate is a house, said to be the one which belonged to Judas, where Saul lodged after his conversion. There is in it a very small closet, where, according to tradition, the Apostle passed the three days he remained blind, and without food. There is also, in Straight Street, a fountain, which is believed to have supplied the water for Saul's baptism. To this time the Christians of Damascus make a point of annually walking in procession to the scene of Saul's conversion, and there reading the history of it.

Saul did not stay long in the Syrian capital after he was baptized, but went into Arabia, where he preached the Gospel for three years, and then returned to Damascus, and taught openly in the synagogues, "and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ."¹ Unable to withstand his arguments, the Jews became enraged, and resolved to kill him. Saul, knowing their design, concealed himself, and his enemies watched the gates by day and by night, that he might not escape. It is evident that no little sensation was created in Damascus by the conversion of Saul to the faith he had been once so indefatigable in attempting

¹ Acts ix. 22.

to crush. In his second epistle to the Corinthians, when recounting the various trials he had gone through, he said, "In Damascus, the governor under Aretas, the king, kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me."¹ Vain, however, were all the efforts of the governor and his soldiers, for the Lord had a mighty work for his servant to accomplish. "Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket."² The window, or port-hole, in the parapet of the great wall of Damascus, through which, it is said, Saul escaped, is still shown, and is called St Paul's Gate. Without any human friend to accompany him, and surrounded by dangers of almost every description, Saul of Tarsus commenced his journey back to Jerusalem. He had, however, one friend near him,—the Lord Jesus, who never left him by night nor by day; and he could, with sincerity, say, "I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."³

The weary journey was accomplished. Oh, how welcome to the traveller would be the first glimpse of the glorious and snow-white temple! But no friend greeted him as he entered Jerusalem. His former associates would have shunned him, even if they had recognized, in the humble penitent

¹ 2 Cor. xi. 32.² Acts. ix. 25.³ Ps. xxiii. 4.

pilgrim, the once proud and spirited Saul of Tarsus. And the disciples either had not heard of his conversion, or did not credit it, for, when he wished to join them, "they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple."¹ Barnabas, however, "brought him to the Apostles, and declared unto them how he (Saul) had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken unto him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus."² The fears of the disciples were at once removed, and Saul "was with them, coming in and going out at Jerusalem. And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him."³ Fifteen days only did he remain at Jerusalem. While he was praying one day in the temple, he fell into a trance, and the Lord appeared unto him, and told him to leave Jerusalem quickly, for he must go far away unto the Gentiles. Saul may have hesitated to go out of the city, for the brethren, we read, knowing the evil designs of the Jews, "brought him down to Cæsarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus."⁴ We cannot help wondering how he was received by his relatives and friends at Tarsus. Did the rigid Phariſee

¹ Acts ix. 26.² Acts ix. 27.³ Acts ix. 28, 29.⁴ Acts ix. 30

(supposing him to be still alive) disown his son? And did his mother and sister shed tears of sorrow and joy when they once more beheld him? Or had some fugitive Christians been preaching Christ crucified in Tarsus, and the whole of Saul's family been illuminated by the glorious light of the blessed Gospel? Willingly would we hope that the latter were the case, and that, in sweet communion with his kindred, Saul spent the three or four years he remained in his native city. Relations, we know, he had who were Christians, some of whom had embraced the faith before his conversion. But where these lived I cannot tell. Two were in Rome when Paul wrote his epistle to the brethren of that city. "Salute," he says, "Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the Apostles, who also were in Christ before me."¹

The history of Saul, from this time till his separation from Barnabas, you have read in the lives of James the Less and Barnabas. One fact, however, I omitted to note, which is this, after Sergius Paulus, the Governor of Cyprus, had been converted, the great Apostle is always spoken of in the sacred history as Paul. There are various conjectures as to the reason of this change; one of which is, that he himself took the latter name

¹ Rom. xvi. 7.

in honour of the noble convert, Sergius Paulus ; but it is very probable that, as Saul was a Jewish name, and Paul a Roman one, he adopted the latter because it was among the pagan Romans he was henceforth chiefly to labour.

After Paul and Barnabas had parted, the former, accompanied by Silas, went through Syria and Cilicia, and then came to Derbe and Lystra. At Derbe the Apostle met with Timothy, and chose him for his companion. The father of Timothy was a Greek ; but his mother, Eunice, was a Jewess, who had, with her mother and son, been converted to Christianity during Paul's previous visit to those parts. The remembrance of the unfeigned faith of Timothy's grandmother, Lois, and of his mother, Eunice, filled Paul with joy : so he tells Timothy in his second epistle to him. I have not space to write at length of the most excellent Timothy. Paul truly loved him, and from remarks he several times made, it is evident that he highly esteemed him. Through various countries the three journeyed, leaving at each city they came to a copy of the decree of the Council of Jerusalem. Their route was directed by the Holy Ghost, who forbade them, after they had been throughout Phrygia and Galatia, preaching in Asia. When they reached Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia ; " but the Spirit

suffered them not,"¹ so they went to Troas. It was here that Luke, the Evangelist, is believed to have joined them, as the word *we*, for the future, often takes the place of *they*. Luke (who wrote the Acts of the Apostles) was a physician; and, as Paul had, in Galatia, been attacked with sickness, it is possible he accompanied him, in order that he might not only assist in the ministry, but attend to the health of the great Apostle. At Troas "a vision appeared to Paul in the night: there stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us."² This was Paul's call to Europe. He obeyed the call; and, with his companions, Timothy, Silas, and Luke, embarked upon the Ægean Sea. Only one island they touched at before they reached the port of Neapolis; from thence they proceeded to Philippi, the capital of Macedonia.

There were so few Jews at Philippi that they had no synagogue, but only an oratory by the river side, wherein they conducted their services, or, as St Luke expresses it, "where prayer was wont to be made."³ In this humble building, to a few poor women, was Christ first preached in Europe; and the first convert we read of was Lydia, a seller of purple dye. She was baptized, with her household, and constrained Paul and his

¹ Acts xvi. 7.² Acts xvi. 9.³ Acts xvi. 13.

companions to become her guests. Daily, would it appear that Paul and his fellow-labourers went to this place of prayer, and they were often followed by a damsel who was a Pythoness, that is, a sort of witch, who, being possessed with a spirit of divination, cried out, "These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation."¹ But Paul needed not Satan to be his witness, and he commanded the demon to come out of her, "and he came out the same hour."² Her masters, who had profited much by her diabolical arts, were very indignant when they found their trade was spoiled; and they caught Paul and Silas, and, taking them before the magistrates, falsely accused them. Most cruelly were the devoted missionaries treated; their clothes were torn off, they were beaten with many stripes, and then thrust into a dark, cold, and damp inner prison. No sleep visited the suffering captives. If their bleeding wounds were not sufficient to prevent them closing their eyes, the painful position they were compelled to be in (as it is supposed that not only their feet, but their hands and their necks were confined in the stocks) would prevent them resting. And how did they pass the long, tedious hours. In prayer? Yes; but not, as

¹ Acts xvi. 17.² Acts xvi. 18.

you might imagine, interrupted by bursts of grief, for "at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God; and the prisoners heard them."¹ Perhaps thieves and murderers, waiting for their doom on the morrow, heard the heavenly strains, and wondered what new sounds they were that made them weep who had never shed tears before; and the less guilty criminals possibly listened with clasped hands and streaming eyes to music which, they knew not why, melted their hearts within them. Only the stern jailer slept; but soon he was to be awake, not only from his temporal, but his spiritual sleep, for "suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. And the keeper of the prison, awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,

¹ Acts xvi. 25.

and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes, and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God, with all his house. And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go. And the keeper of the prison told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go; now therefore depart, and go in peace. But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly, uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? Nay, verily, but let them come themselves, and fetch us out. And the serjeants told these words unto the magistrates, and they feared when they heard that they were Romans. And they came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city."¹ And so the noble and brave Paul and Silas were brought out of prison by the frightened and humbled magistrates, who were indebted solely to the Christian forbearance of their late victims, that they were not punished for the breach of the law in having scourged Roman citizens.

¹ Acts xvi. 26-39.

Paul and Silas shortly after this departed from Philippi, leaving Timothy and Luke in charge of the infant church there. At Thessalonica, Paul reasoned with the Jews in their synagogue. He reminds the Thessalonian disciples of this in his first epistle to them, "Even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention."¹ Some unbelieving Jews, however of the lowest class, collected a mob, and set all the city in an uproar, assaulting the house of Jason, where Paul and Silas lodged; but the brethren sent away Paul and Silas by night to Berea. Here the great Apostle was much encouraged, for the Jews of Berea "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so. Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few." The Jews, however, of Thessalonica, followed Paul and Silas to Berea, and stirred up the people against them. The brethren immediately sent Paul away, but Silas and Timothy (the latter must have joined his two friends again) remained at Berea. Under the care of an escort, Paul travelled south till he arrived at Athens, when

¹ 1 Thess. i. 2.² Acts xvii. 11, 12.

his friends from Berea left him, and returned home, conveying a message from Paul to Silas and Timothy that they should come to him with all speed. In a strange city, perhaps still suffering from the ill-treatment he met with at Philippi, no wonder Paul longed for the society of his faithful and tried companions. Idle, however, he could not be. He disputed in the synagogue and in the market daily. He was accused, among other things, of being a setter forth of strange gods, because he preached unto the people Jesus and the resurrection. They took him to Areopagus, or Mars' Hill, the principal court of justice in Athens. The Areopagus was an ancient and celebrated tribunal held on a hill of rock, in some of the caverns of which the Furies (spirits supposed to be charged with the infliction of divine vengeance) were reputed to dwell. The Areopagites, who were the chief men of the city, judged murderers and all immoral persons. They also rewarded virtue, and were particularly active in punishing those who set up strange gods. More than four hundred years before Paul was brought to this tribunal, Socrates, having been accused of the crime of introducing strange deities into the state, was condemned by the Areopagites to drink the cup of hemlock.

Paul, we are told, stood in the midst of Mars'

Hill. How impressive the scene must have been ! The undaunted Apostle beneath the blue canopy of heaven, at the top of the rock, facing his noble judges, who occupied seats hewn out of the stone. Before the prisoner was spread a glorious prospect of mountains, islands, and seas ; and, behind him, arose the lofty Acropolis, crowned with all its marble temples. Having been asked to explain the new doctrine of which he had spoken, he replied that, in passing through their city, he had observed an altar with this inscription, "To the unknown God."¹ He then, in a few simple words, told his listeners who the unknown God was whom they ignorantly worshipped, that he was no other than the great God, the creator of all things, the Lord of heaven and earth, who dwelleth not in temples made with hands, "neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things."² The remainder of Paul's address to the Athenians you will find in the seventeenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. The effect produced upon his listeners was that some mocked, "and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter,"³ and some believed. Among the last was Dionysius, the Areopagite, who is said to have been afterwards made Bishop of Athens, and to have been burned

¹ Acts xvii. 23.² Acts xvii. 25.³ Acts xvii. 32.

to death in that city in the year A.D. 93. The palace he occupied previous to his conversion stood close to Mars' Hill, and, upon the site of it, a church was afterwards built, which is now a ruin. Another person, mentioned as having been converted in Athens, was a woman, named Damaris, supposed by some to have been the wife of Dionysius. Paul, it seems, was allowed to leave Athens without further molestation. He went next to Corinth, and there abode with a Jew of the name of Aquila, and his wife, Priscilla, who had been, with a great number of other Jews, banished from Rome by the Emperor Claudius. They were tent-makers, and, as Paul would not be burdensome to them, he wrought at his old trade for his daily bread. It was in Corinth, and most probably in the house of Aquila and Priscilla, that he wrote the first of his epistles, which was to the Thessalonians. Shortly after he wrote, also in Corinth, his second epistle to the Thessalonians. The friendship he at this time formed with the excellent Aquila and Priscilla lasted until his death. On the Sabbath days he reasoned in the synagogues, but the unbelieving Jews opposed him so violently that he shook his raiment, and said unto them, "Your blood be upon your own heads: I am clean. From henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles."¹

¹ Acts xviii. 6.

The Lord, however, appeared to Paul in a vision in the night, and said, "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace, for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee; for I have much people in this city. And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them."¹ He made use of the house of a convert, of the name of Justus, to preach in, though still living with Aquila and Priscilla. There can be no doubt that Paul worked at tent-making during the whole of the time he stayed at Corinth; and, possibly, notwithstanding this, he suffered from want, as a famine was then prevailing throughout Greece. He, was however, cheered by the arrival of Silas and Timothy from Macedonia, who brought him relief from that country. St Paul, in his second epistle to the Corinthians, says, "And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man; for that which was lacking to me, the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied."²

Among those who believed in Corinth was Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue. The conversion of such an influential person enraged the Jews more and more, so they made an insurrection, and took Paul before Gallio, the pro-consul, but he would not listen to them, and drove

¹ Acts xviii. 9-11.

² 2 Cor. xi. 9.

them from the judgment seat. And the Greeks took Sosthenes, (probably the successor of Crispus,) the chief ruler of the synagogue, "and beat him before the judgment seat. And Gallio cared for none of those things."¹ He did not consider it his province to interfere in the disputes between the Jews and the Christians. Well, perhaps, it would have been for him if he had concerned himself in the matter, and given Paul an opportunity of defending himself before him, for he was talented and amiable, and might have been led to believe in Jesus. It may not be uninteresting to you to know that Gallio was the elder brother of Seneca, the philosopher. Having planted the church in Corinth, Paul sailed to Ephesus, Aquila and Priscilla accompanying him. The Apostle did not remain long at Ephesus, but left his travelling companions there, and went up to Jerusalem, to one of the feasts. After a very short stay in the holy city, he paid what was, probably, his last visit to Antioch. Many years had Paul now laboured as a servant of Christ, but still he thought not of rest; and after staying at Antioch some time, he set out on his third missionary journey. He directed his course towards Ephesus. You will remember that he left Aquila and Priscilla in that city. This worthy couple did all

¹ Acts xviii. 17.

they could to promote the spread of the Gospel ; and while they were at Ephesus during Paul's absence, " a certain Jew, named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord ; and, being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue : whom, when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him : who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace : for he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ."¹

For three months, Paul taught in the synagogue at Ephesus ; but, meeting with great opposition from the Jews, he left the synagogue, and, taking with him those who had been brought to Christ, he, in the school of one Tyrannus, instructed them and others, " and this continued by the space of two years ; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. And God wrought special miracles by

¹ Acts xviii. 24-28.

the hands of Paul : so that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them. Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus, whom Paul preacheth. And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know : but who are ye ? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. And this was known to all the Jews, and Greeks also, dwelling at Ephesus ; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. And many that believed came, and confessed, and showed their deeds. Many of them, also, which used curious arts, brought their books together, and burned them before all men : and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.”¹

Three years did the great Apostle remain at Ephesus, lodging in all probability with Aquila

¹ Acts xix. 10-20.

and Priscilla, and working with them at the trade of tent-making. Shortly before he left the city, a circumstance occurred which rendered it impossible for him to remain longer there with any degree of safety.

The great pride and glory of Ephesus was the temple of Diana, a short description of which will not be out of place here. I must, however, first speak of the false deity for whom this splendid house was prepared. It is difficult to say who she was, as, some hundreds of years before Paul was at Ephesus, she had, according to tradition, fallen from heaven. The priests said Jupiter had sent her. Those who had no faith in her said that she had been made by men who, as soon as she was finished, were put to death or banished by the priests, for fear they should betray her humble origin. As she presented, upon her first appearance, a shapeless form that required a stretch of the imagination to regard as anything like human, and in which form she is represented on ancient coins, she probably did fall from heaven, and was neither more nor less than an aerolite or meteoric stone. I suppose it was sufficient for superstitious people that the priests *said* that the lump of stone was a goddess, and Jupiter's gift. She was magnificently adorned, and I should imagine, when she took possession of her temple

Jupiter himself would scarcely have recognized her. This temple, for beauty and costliness, became one of the seven wonders of the world. It was built entirely of marble, of such pure whiteness that it dazzled the eyes of the beholder ; and was four hundred and twenty-nine feet long, and two hundred and twenty broad. The shrine of the goddess was surrounded by a colonnade, open to the sky, composed of a hundred and twenty-seven columns of Parian marble, sixty feet high, each weighing a hundred and fifty tons, and each the gift of a monarch. Inside, it was decorated with cedar, cypress, gold, jewels, and precious stones, pictures, and statues. One picture alone was worth twenty talents of gold.* One of the statues was of pure gold ; and the altar was most magnificent. The roof was supported by columns of green jasper.

The silversmiths of Ephesus made multitudes of cabinets or chaplets, little shrines, in the form of the temple, with an image of Diana in each of them. These, and probably silver medals of the splendid temple, they sold to strangers, for the false deity had numerous worshippers in various parts of Greece. At one season of the year in particular, crowds from all parts of Asia, and of Europe, went to Ephesus, to the great annual

* £38,750.

festival in honour of Diana, and fortunate would any stranger deem himself who could purchase a silver shrine or medal.

The natural consequence of the spread of Christianity was the decline of the gainful trade of the silversmiths. One of these, Demetrius, called his fellow-craftsmen and their workmen together, and told them that, through the preaching of Paul, not only was their trade in danger, but the great goddess Diana would be despised, and they "cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians."¹ The whole city was soon in confusion. The multitude seized two of Paul's companions, Gaius and Aristarchus, and rushed with them into the theatre, probably with the design of casting them to the wild beasts. The brave and noble Paul, hearing of their danger, would have forced his way into the theatre, but the disciples prevented him, knowing that the people would at once throw him to the wild beasts, which were kept there for the amusement of the populace. The confusion was very great, the majority not knowing the reason of the tumult. For two hours nothing could be heard but the cry, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." When the mob had become a little calmer, the town-clerk addressed the people, and succeeded in appeasing them. But it was no longer safe for

¹ Acts xix. 28.

Paul to remain at Ephesus, so he left the city, and went into Macedonia.

Judæa was, at this time, in a fearful state. Evils of almost every description,—famine, wars, and banditti,—were desolating the country. From Macedonia, Paul went into Greece, where he met Titus, who had brought great contributions from the church at Corinth for the poor Christians in Jerusalem. Paul was determined himself to carry the assistance to his suffering brethren in Judæa. He was about to sail for Syria, when he heard that some Jews were lying in wait to kill him; so he went back into Macedonia, and embarked, with several others, from that coast to Troas. While at Troas, the indefatigable Apostle preached, on the Sabbath, in an upper room till midnight. One of his listeners, a young man named Eutychus, who had become drowsy, fell from the window in which he had been sitting, and was taken up dead. “And Paul went down, and fell on him, and, embracing him, said, Trouble not yourselves, for his life is in him. When he, therefore, was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed. And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted.”¹

Paul’s companions had proceeded on their

¹ Acts xx. 10-12.

journey, while he remained an hour or two longer at Troas, instructing and comforting the converts. He went on foot and alone along the shore to Assos, where, according to arrangement, the company were waiting for him. He and his friends embarked on the *Ægean Sea*. Their course lay past the most lovely scenery. They first cast anchor at Mitylene, the capital of the beautiful island of Lesbos, (now Mitylene.) Sailing from thence, they next touched at Chios, and arrived the next day at Samos. Paul must, when approaching Samos, have been within a very few miles of Ephesus, in which city he had many dear children in the Lord, whom he longed to see ; but he "had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia : for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost."¹ At Miletus the travellers landed. Ephesus was thirty miles from this city, and Paul sent, desiring the elders of the church of Ephesus to come to him. They obeyed the summons. We can imagine how affecting would be the meeting. A year before, Paul had been obliged to hastily leave them, to avoid the fury of the enraged worshippers of Diana, and now he knew it was very probable that they would see his face no more. His touching, beautiful, and affectionate farewell

address to them you have often read in the twentieth chapter of the Acts. When he had ceased speaking, "he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship."¹

We hear but little more of Ephesus in connexion with St Paul. This once magnificent city, that was considered the metropolis of Asia, and was called by Pliny the ornament of Asia, is now a perfect wreck: all is silence and desolation around it. The splendid harbour, that was wont to be filled with vessels from all nations, is now a pestilential marsh, the sea having retired from it. Noble ruins are all now that remain of the theatre, and the very site of the temple is uncertain. The call of the partridge may now be heard where the multitude cried "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." The only relics that have been preserved of the magnificent temple of Diana are eight of the green jasper columns which supported the roof of the shrine of the false goddess. These were removed to Constantinople, and may still be seen in the great Mosque of St Sophia. The few wretched inhabitants of Ephesus, chiefly Greeks, live among

¹ Acts xx. 36-38.

the ruins, some occupying the vaults of the once gorgeous edifices, and some the sepulchres hewn out of the precipices. You will remember that the glorified Redeemer sent a message by St John to the angel, or bishop, of Ephesus, accusing the church of that city of having left her first love, or, in other words, of having declined in religious fervour, and threatening to remove her candlestick if she did not repent. She did not repent, and her light is wholly extinguished ; for not a single resident Christian remains at Ephesus, to read either the message from heaven, or the epistle of the great Apostle to its church.

To return to Paul and his companions. On the shore of Miletus the parting kiss was given, but the weeping elders of Ephesus accompanied their beloved father in God to the ship, and even then were unwilling to say farewell. The voyagers sailed straight to Coos, and from thence to Rhodes,* and from Rhodes to Patara, where they found a vessel about to sail for Tyre. In her they

* Rhodes was celebrated for the Colossus, a gigantic brazen image, which was made about 300 years B.C. This huge statue was 126 feet high, and each finger was as large as a man. It was used as an observatory, a winding staircase running to the top. It only stood fifty or sixty years, when it was thrown down by an earthquake ; and for 894 years it remained where it fell, consequently, when St Paul visited the island, the monster was lying on the beach. At length the brass was sold to a Jew for £38,000, and the

took passage, and accomplished in safety the voyage of four hundred miles. At Tyre they found some disciples who had the gift of prophecy. These foresaw what would befall the Apostle at Jerusalem, and tried to persuade him not to go up to the feast ; but he was not to be deterred from his purpose. Luke says, "And when we had accomplished those days, we departed, and went our way ; and they all brought us on our way, with wives and children, till we were out of the city, and we kneeled down on the shore and prayed. And when we had taken our leave one of another, we took ship, and they returned home again."¹ The next port they stayed at was Ptolemais, (Acre,) where they found some disciples, and abode with them one day ; the next day they landed at Cæsarea. Philip, the deacon, received the weary travellers, and they remained with him many days, his four pious daughters, doubtless, with affectionate care, attending to their comfort. Here another prophetic voice warned the great Apostle not to go to Jerusalem. Agabus, of whom you have heard before, arrived at Cæsarea, and went to the house of Philip. When he saw the pilgrims, "he took Paul's girdle, and

great Colossus was carried away in fragments on nine hundred camels.

¹ Acts xxi. 5, 6.

bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. And when we (Luke continues) heard these things, both we and they of that place besought him not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready, not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord Jesus. And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done. And after those days, we took up our carriages, and went up to Jerusalem."¹ The word carriages here means baggage.

Welcome, indeed, to the suffering Christians in Jerusalem, was the sight of Paul and his friends. One day was spent, we may suppose, in mutual inquiries, congratulations, and condolences; and we read that the day following, the strangers went to the house of James the Bishop, where all the elders met him. After saluting them, Paul told them how God had blest his labours among the Gentiles, for which they glorified the Lord. They then informed him that in Jerusalem there were many thousand Jewish converts, who had a great veneration for the law, and that they had heard

¹ Acts xxi. 11-15.

that he (Paul) had preached against the ceremonies of the law, and consequently, as soon as his arrival was known, multitudes would come together to hear if this were true. It was agreed, in order that the Jewish converts might be convinced that they had heard a false report, that he should join himself to four men who had taken a vow, probably for deliverance from sickness, or from some great danger, and that he should perform the usual ceremonies in such a case. This Paul agreed to; but the next day, when he went into the temple with the four men to make their offerings, some Jews from Asia stirred up the people, and a tumult was raised against the devoted Paul. He was seized, and dragged out of the temple, and would have been murdered by the excited mob, if the chief captain of the garrison had not, with his soldiers, rescued him. Supposing Paul to be a common malefactor, the captain ordered a double chain to be put on him, and that he should be taken to the castle. So violent were the angry Jews that the soldiers had to bear the Apostle in their arms to prevent him being torn to pieces. As they were going into the castle, Paul begged the governor to allow him to speak to the people. "And when he had given him license, Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people."¹

¹ Acts xxi. 40.

In perfect silence the assembly listened to his defence, until he spoke of his mission to the Gentiles, and then they "lifted up their voices, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth; for it is not fit that he should live. And as they cried out, and cast off their clothes, and threw dust into the air, the chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging, that he might know wherefore they cried so against him. And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?"¹ When the chief captain heard that Paul was a Roman, he gave orders that he should not be whipped. The freedom of the city of Rome was Paul's by birthright, he having inherited it from his ancestors. The next day the Apostle's chains were knocked off, and he was taken to the sanhedrim. As he stood before his seventy judges, he must have thought of the holy Stephen, who, twenty-four years before, had, on the same spot, answered his accusers. "And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day."² This bold assertion of his innocence so enraged the high priest, that he com-

¹ Acts xxii. 22-25.

² Acts xxiii. 1.

manded them that stood by to smite him on the mouth. Paul's spirit was roused at this new insult, and, not knowing that it was the high priest who had spoken, he said, "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall; for, sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?"¹ Twelve years afterwards, Ananias was slain, when Jerusalem was besieged. Paul perceived that his judges were composed of Pharisees and Sadducees, and being wise as a serpent, though harmless as a dove, he cried out, "Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee. Of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question."² In the last few words he had touched upon the doctrine that caused the greatest dissension between the two sects. "For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit; but the Pharisees confess both."³ So the latter wished to release Paul. "And when there arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces of them, commanded the soldiers to go down, and to take him by force from among them, and to bring him into the castle. And the night following, the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul, for as thou hast testified of

¹ Acts xxiii. 3.² Acts xxiii. 6.³ Acts xxiii. 8.

me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.”¹

Forty vagabond Jews bound themselves by an oath that they would eat nothing until they had killed Paul, but the nephew of their intended victim heard of the plot, and he went into the castle and told Paul, who desired one of the centurions to take the young man to the chief captain. This was done ; and when the captain had heard how that the Jews were lying in wait to kill Paul, “ he called unto him two centurions, saying, Make ready two hundred soldiers to go to Cæsarea, and horsemen threescore and ten, and spearmen two hundred, at the third hour of the night ; and provide them beasts, that they may set Paul on, and bring him safe unto Felix the governor.”² Claudius Lysias, the captain, also wrote a letter to Felix, telling him what Paul was accused of, and why he had sent him. When the soldiers with their prisoner arrived at Cæsarea, they delivered the letter to Felix, who, when he had read it, asked Paul what province he was of, and, on being told he was a Cilician, decided to wait till his accusers arrived. After five days, Ananias the priest came to Cæsarea, bringing with him a famous orator, named Tertullus, to speak against Paul. This man said that Paul was guilty of sedition,

¹ Acts xxiii. 10, 11.

Acts xxiii. 23, 24.

heresy, and profanation of the temple. Paul defended himself, and proved that he was falsely accused. Most eloquently did he plead his own cause. But Felix refused to give judgment in the case till he had seen Lysias. "And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let him have liberty, and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him."¹ For two years Paul remained a prisoner at Cæsarea; and doubtless Philip, his four daughters, and many others, not only belonging to Cæsarea, but Ptolemais, Tyre, Sidon, and the neighbouring places, availed themselves of the privilege of visiting him. Luke was almost his constant companion. Felix often sent for the Apostle to commune with him. At the first interview, Paul, knowing the character of the wicked man in whose presence he stood, reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come. The conscience of the unjust, cruel, immoral, and covetous governor was roused. "Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."² Frequently afterwards did he call for his prisoner; but, alas! not to learn from him the way of salvation, but to endeavour to corrupt him, for he hoped "that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him."³ He probably bore

¹ Acts xxiv. 23.² Acts xxiv. 25.³ Acts xxiv. 26.

in mind that Paul had brought alms and offerings from the Macedonian Christians for their brethren in Jerusalem.

Felix was removed from his office, and Porcius Festus, a just and honourable man, succeeded him as governor of Cæsarea. Three days afterwards, business called Festus to Jerusalem. The high priest and the chief of the Jews at once asked him, as a favour, to send for Paul, wickedly intending to lie in wait for the Apostle on the road and assassinate him. Festus did not comply with their request ; but, when he returned to Cæsarea, took some of Paul's accusers with him. The Apostle being brought before the judgment-seat, the Jews laid many and grievous complaints against him which they could not prove. Paul asserted his innocence. " But Festus, willing to do the Jews a pleasure, answered Paul, and said, Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me ?" ¹ The Apostle, knowing what would be the consequence if he were sent to Jerusalem, told Festus that he was a Roman, and ought to be judged by the laws of Rome ; and he, then, solemnly appealed unto Cæsar.

Some time afterwards, King Agrippa, son of Herod Agrippa, who put James the Great to death, came to Cæsarea, with his sister Bernice,

¹ Acts xxv. 9.

on a visit to the new governor, who told them all about Paul. "Then Agrippa said unto Festus, I would also hear the man myself. To-morrow, said he, thou shalt hear him. And on the morrow, when Agrippa was come, and Bernice, with great pomp, and was entered into the place of hearing, with the chief captains, and principal men of the city, at Festus' commandment Paul was brought forth,"¹ chained to the soldier who guarded him. The Roman method of fettering criminals was to fix one end of a chain on the prisoner's right arm, and the other to the left arm of a soldier. The fact of publicly wearing this chain, and being coupled with a soldier, was considered very disgraceful, and the ignominy would naturally occasion the desertion of former friends. Paul experienced the truth of this, and to Timothy, in his second epistle, speaks with gratitude of one who clung to him notwithstanding his humiliating bonds. "The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus, for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; but, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day."² In extreme cases the prisoner was fastened with two chains to two soldiers. Peter was thus confined when he was "sleeping between two soldiers"³ in

¹ Acts xxv. 22, 23. ² 2 Tim. i. 16, 17. ³ Acts xii. 6.

prison. Paul, also, was fastened to two soldiers when the Jews in Jerusalem wanted to take him.

To return to Cæsarea. When Paul was brought before Festus and Agrippa, the former began by stating the prisoner's case, and that he did not know what to say in writing to Cæsar when he sent Paul to him. "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself."¹ After telling the king that he had been brought up a Pharisee, he gave him the history of his conversion. Festus, being a heathen, knew nothing of Moses, the prophets, or the expected Redeemer, and believing Paul to be a person deceived by his imagination, he became impatient, and interrupting him, cried out, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad. But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness. For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner. King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. And Paul said, I would to God that

¹ Acts xxvi. 1.

not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds."¹ How startling must have been the effect of the noble prisoner's words! His voice, his expression, his whole attitude would speak for his sincerity, as he raised his chained hand, and prayed that they, his enemies, might be altogether such as he was, except those bonds. All the inward peace which passeth understanding, all the joy in his blessed Saviour, and all the hope of an immortal crown, he prayed his enemies might share with him, but not his fetters. How truly did Paul obey the precept of his divine Master, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."²

When the great Apostle had ceased speaking, the royal party arose and left the place of hearing. They retired to commune with one another, and Paul went back to prison to commune with his God. The king, the governor, the officers of state, the magistrates, and the principal men of Cæsarea, unanimously pronounced Paul to be innocent, and he would have been at once set at liberty if he had not appealed unto Cæsar. We cannot help wondering whether any of that assembly who had listened

¹ Acts xxvi. 24-29.

² Matt. v.

to Paul were not only almost, but altogether, persuaded to be Christians. Possibly some were, and afterwards testified that, as far as they were concerned, the Apostle's prayer was answered, but Agrippa and Festus were not of the number; and Bernice, if history may be relied upon, many years after Paul had changed his fetters for an immortal crown, was living, not only in an unconverted state, but in open sin.

It was decided to send Paul to Rome in the charge of a centurion, of the name of Julius, who accordingly embarked from Cæsarea with the Apostle, Luke, Timothy, and Aristarchus: the last was one of the two Christians who were carried by the mob into the theatre at Ephesus. After a sail of eighty miles, they reached Sidon, where Paul was allowed to go on shore to visit his friends. They next crossed the Sea of Cilicia, and, consequently, passed Paul's native country. At Myra, a city of Lycia, they cast anchor, and the prisoners, among whom, doubtless, were many malefactors of the worst description, were removed to a large Alexandrian corn ship, which was about to sail for Italy. When they had arrived at Fair Havens, a harbour of Crete, the wind being very boisterous, and sailing dangerous, Paul, who was, owing to his many voyages, an experienced sailor, said to those who had charge of him, "Sirs, I per-

ceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives.”¹ The centurion, however, gave more heed to the captain, who thought they might try and reach Phenice, another port of Crete, it being more convenient to winter in than Fair Havens. A soft south wind favoured their leaving Fair Havens, and they sailed from thence. But not long after there arose a tempestuous north-east wind, called Euroclydon, which bore down all before it, and they were forced to let the ship drive at the pleasure of the wind. They threw out some of the lading and tackling of the ship. For fourteen days they continued in this state, neither sun nor stars appearing for a great part of the time. “But, after long abstinence, Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss. And now, I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man’s life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar: and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer; for I believe God, that it shall be even as

¹ Acts xxvii. 10.

it was told me. Howbeit, we must be cast upon a certain island.¹"

On the fourteenth night, as the ship was being driven up and down in Adria, (the Adriatic * sea,) the sailors, fearing lest it might be dashed to pieces on the rocks, cast four anchors, and intended to make their escape in a boat, and leave the passengers to their fate. Paul, seeing this, told the centurion and the soldiers that, unless the sailors remained in the ship, they could not be saved. He meant them to understand that, though God had promised that not one of those in the ship should perish, he expected them to use every effort for their own preservation. The mariners, consequently, were not suffered to forsake the vessel. When the day began to dawn, Paul besought all to take some meat, as, for the past fortnight, they had been so overcome with fear and horror at their position, that they had been unable to take their ordinary food. Paul was now the counsellor to whom every one looked up. His directions were followed, and when he spoke words of comfort, all

¹ Acts xxvii. 21-26.

* In St Paul's time the name Adriatic was not confined, as it is now, to that portion of the Mediterranean which flows between Dalmatia and Italy, but was given to the whole sea lying between Greece, Italy, and Africa, including the Sicilian and Ionian Sea.

were cheered, What a scene it must have been on that Egyptian vessel at break of day! Between two and three hundred terror-stricken wretches, with pale and haggard faces, resting their entire hope upon one man, and he a prisoner in chains. With the tempest raging around him, and the sea rolling mountains high, the holy Apostle "took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all, and, when he had broken it, he began to eat:"¹ they all took some meat, and were much refreshed. "And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, and cast out the wheat into the sea."² Daylight revealed to them that they were near land, so they took up the anchors, and let the ship run aground. "And the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmovable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves. And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out and escape. But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land, and the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass that they escaped all safe to land,"³ and found themselves on an island called Melita (Malta.) They were received kindly by the in-

¹ Acts xxvii. 35.² Acts xxvii. 38.³ Acts xxvii. 41-44.

habitants, who, because it was wet and cold, made a fire for them. Paul assisted in the work, and, having gathered a bundle of sticks, laid them on the fire. A viper was among them, and it no sooner felt the heat than it sprang out of the flame, and fastened on the Apostle's hand. "And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live. And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm."¹ The people, when they saw his hand did not swell, or that he did not drop down dead, thought then that he must be a god. The Greeks and Romans called all foreigners barbarians, which accounts for the inhabitants of Melita being thus styled by St Luke. They were not barbarians in the sense in which we use the word, for, when Paul was in Melita, its inhabitants were in a high state of prosperity and civilization.

The governor of the island hospitably entertained Paul and his friends for three days. His humanity did not go unrewarded, for his father "lay sick of a fever, and of a bloody flux, to whom Paul entered in and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him."² It is said that Publius became a Christian, and that he died bishop of

¹ Acts xxviii. 4-5.

² Acts xxviii. 8.

Melita. Certain it is that Paul planted a Christian Church in the island, which became famous for its steadfastness in the faith. No mention is made as to how Luke, Timothy, and Aristarchus conducted themselves during the shipwreck, but we may rest assured that with them all was well, and that they exerted themselves to the utmost to assist and comfort their fellow-passengers. They, doubtless, laboured with Paul in Melita, and the inhabitants were not ungrateful, for, Luke says, they "honoured us with many honours; and when we departed, they laded us with such things as were necessary."¹ Three months did they remain at Melita, and then embarked in an Alexandrian vessel, called *Castor* and *Pollux*, which was bound for Italy. In due time they reached Syracuse, the capital of Sicily, where they stayed three days. From thence they sailed to Rhegium, now Reggio, the capital of Calabria, and the next day arrived at Puteoli, a beautiful sea-port, situated about one hundred miles south of Rome. The *Castor* and *Pollux* had now reached her destination, and the Apostle and his companions, having found brethren, were permitted to remain with their Christian friends seven days, after which they proceeded towards Rome. The disciples in the city had heard of their approach, and some went to meet them as

¹ Acts xxviii. 10.

far as Appii Forum, a distance of about fifty miles, others waited for them at the Three Taverns, a village situated about thirty miles from Rome. When Paul saw these devoted Christians, "he thanked God and took courage."¹ Not only was he rejoiced to meet them, but he was cheered by their zeal and energy. It was also a relief to him to find that the followers of Jesus had so much liberty.

Touching, indeed, must have been the sight of Paul's first entrance into the capital of the world. No herald announced his approach. No acclamation of a multitude told that he had arrived; but a greater conqueror than had ever passed through the gates, with captive princes following his chariot, now might be seen in the form of a prisoner chained to a soldier, and attended by a band of pilgrims, who triumphantly conducted the mighty Apostle into the city. Paul was not treated in Rome like an ordinary prisoner. It is supposed that the centurion Julius spoke favourably of him, for, while the malefactors were secured in the common jail, he was allowed to live in his own hired house, but still chained to the soldier who guarded him. Paul's great desire, expressed in his epistle to the Romans, was now accomplished. "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye

¹ Acts xxviii. 15.

may be established ; that is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.”¹

After three days, Paul called the chief of the Jews together, and told them the cause of his coming to Rome ; that he had been guilty of no violation of the laws of their religion, yet he had been delivered into the hands of the Roman governors, who found him innocent of any capital offence, and would have acquitted him, but the spitefulness of the Jews was such that he was obliged, in order to clear himself, to appeal unto Cæsar, and that he had sent for them to let them know that it was “for the hope of Israel,”² or, in other words, for preaching the Messiah and a future state, he was bound with that chain. The Jews replied, that they had heard nothing evil of him, either by letters from Judæa or through friends of theirs who had come to Rome ; but they wished to be informed about the religion which was everywhere spoken against. A day was accordingly appointed ; and Paul discoursed with them from morning till night about the doctrine of Jesus proving from the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament that he was the Christ. “And some believed the things which were spoken, and

¹ Rom. i. 11, 12.

² Acts xxviii. 20.

some believed not.”¹ The latter left the Apostle with a solemn warning from his lips sounding in their ears, and the assurance that henceforth he would turn to the Gentiles. For two years Paul remained in Rome, employing himself constantly in preaching and writing, no one forbidding him.

Here St Luke abruptly closes his history; but, from St Paul’s epistles, we find that great success attended his (Paul’s) labours in Rome, many of high rank becoming believers, some of whom belonged even to Nero’s court. “All the saints,” he says, in his epistle to the Philippians, “salute you, chiefly they that are of Cæsar’s household.”² Among those who did Paul great service during his first imprisonment in Rome was Onesimus, a slave belonging to Philemon, a wealthy citizen of Colosse, who had been converted to Christianity by St Paul’s ministry. Onesimus ran away from his master and went to Rome, carrying some valuables with him. He attended Paul’s preaching in that city, repented of his sins, and acknowledged his faults to the Apostle, who instructed him in the doctrines of the Gospel, and, after he had given evidence of his faith in the Lord Jesus, baptized him. Paul would have willingly kept him near him, but he thought it would be an act of injustice to Philemon to do

¹ Acts xxviii. 24.

² Philip. iv. 22.

so, accordingly he sent Onesimus back to Colosse with a most earnest and affectionate letter to his master, begging him to receive his slave again into his family, and offering to make full compensation for any loss Philemon had sustained through Onesimus. We are not told what was the result of this epistle, but we may reasonably suppose that Paul was right in his conjecture, when he said, "Knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say."¹ There was a bishop of Ephesus, named Onesimus, and it has been supposed by some that he was the pardoned slave of Philemon. The epistle to Philemon, written by "Paul the aged,"² is considered a masterpiece of its kind. We find, from the first and twenty-fourth verses, that Timothy, Mark, and Luke were with him when he wrote it.

During Paul's first imprisonment, the Philippians, knowing that he would be in want of common necessities, raised a sum of money for him, and sent it by Epaphroditus, their bishop, who became dangerously ill in Rome. Upon his recovery, he returned to Philippi, carrying with him the epistle of Paul to the church of that city. Did ever any father write in stronger terms of endearment to his children than the Apostle did to the Philippians? "Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved

¹ Philem. ver. 21.² Philem. ver. 9.

and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved."¹ Such a passage as this shows how deep and earnest his affection was for them. In Rome, he also wrote his epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians, and it is supposed that about this time he wrote (possibly from Rome) the epistle to the Hebrews.

His first trial before Nero took place, it is believed, in the early part of the year 63. Calm and dignified the noble Paul stood in the presence of the cruel and profligate young emperor. There is no record left of the particulars of the trial; but, contrary to the expectation of many, he was acquitted. It is conjectured that the Jews dared not to appear against him. If this were true, they showed their wisdom by keeping out of the way of a monster who seemed ready to devour all who crossed his path.

There is some doubt as to the course the indefatigable Apostle took after he quitted Rome, but the prevailing opinion is, that he went at once to Jerusalem, accompanied, when he set off on his long journey, by Timothy and Titus. The latter, however, he left in Crete, of which island Titus was bishop. Having visited the churches in Judæa, the venerable Apostle and his beloved Timothy went through Syria, Cilicia, and Asia Minor.

¹ Philip. iv. 1.

They continued some time at Colosse ; and here Paul, probably, again met Philemon and Onesimus. Paul left Timothy at Ephesus, and proceeded to Macedonia, visiting the churches. From Macedonia he wrote his epistle to Titus, and also his first epistle to Timothy, giving his friends full instructions for their conduct as bishops of the Church of God. After visiting Greece, Crete, and other places, he directed his course westward. It is supposed that after remaining some time in Spain, he preached the Gospel in Britain. Clement, bishop of Rome, in his epistle to the Corinthians, a part of which has been handed down to us, says that Paul travelled to the extreme west, and carried salvation to the islands that lie in the ocean, by which he means the British Isles. When the Apostle was first a prisoner in Rome, Britain was suffering much from the ambition of the Romans. Caractacus had been, a few years before, defeated and carried a prisoner to Rome. While Paul was there, the Britons revolted under Boadicea, London was burnt, and several thousands of Romans perished. Ten thousand warriors were at once despatched from Rome against Boadicea, who was defeated, and eighty thousand Britons were massacred. Paul, who had friends in the imperial city of all grades, from the prison to the palace, would doubtless hear the particulars

of these sad events. How would his lofty spirit sympathize with the noble Caractacus, and how would he long to comfort the afflicted Boadicea by leading her to the fountain of healing waters. Perhaps he may have become personally acquainted with some of the illustrious Britons who were in Rome at the time he was. But this is mere conjecture.

It was in the eleventh or twelfth year of Nero's reign that Paul was again a prisoner in Rome ; but not as before permitted to live in his own hired house, but cast into the common prison. He knew that he would not again escape out of the lion's mouth. In his second epistle to Timothy, which was written at this time, he says, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand."¹ He then entreats his beloved son to hasten to him. Whether Timothy ever again saw his revered friend and preceptor or not, I cannot say.

The enemies of Paul were resolved to put him to death. He went through a form of trial, for he tells Timothy that, at his first answer, all men forsook him. The cruel Nero had struck terror into the hearts of even the brave Christians, for every species of torture that the wretched tyrant could conceive they were made to endure. In the year A.D. 64, a great fire broke out in Rome,

¹ 2 Tim iv. 6.

which raged for six days, and there were strong suspicions that the Emperor himself was the cause of it, many of the buildings not being according to his fastidious taste. His subjects were justly indignant with him, so, to screen himself, he laid the blame of the calamity upon the Christians. The consequence was that the devoted followers of Jesus were most mercilessly persecuted. Some were burnt; others stabbed with forks; some sewn up in skins of beasts, and then devoured by dogs; many were flayed alive; in short, every species of cruelty was practised upon them. Persecution still raged in the city, when Paul arrived; and he was forthwith thrown into prison. That he was a Christian was a sufficient crime; but it has been said that Nero was chiefly enraged at him because he had converted to the faith a favourite lady of his abandoned court, who henceforth refused to have any intercourse with him. How long Paul remained in prison is not precisely known; but, we may be assured, that when his hour of release came he was ready, and in truth he could say, "I have fought a good¹ fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day."¹

¹ 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

In the church of St Mary, beyond the bridge, in Rome, a pillar stood, so late as the sixteenth century, to which, it was said, the great Apostle was bound when he was scourged, though, as a Roman citizen, he ought to have been spared that degradation. He was sentenced to be beheaded. The scene of his martyrdom was Aquæ Salvæ, three miles from Rome. As he was being led forth from the city, it is said that three of the soldiers who guarded him became converts to the faith, and were, a few days afterwards, by Nero's command, put to death. Arrived at the fatal spot, Paul solemnly prepared himself, and then cheerfully submitted to the stroke of the executioner, and so entered into his rest.

“’Tis past, ’tis o’er !—now rest how sweet,
His trials all are fled !
Before the Saviour’s mercy-seat,
(His livelong work of faith complete,)
The conqueror bends his head.”

By the death of St Paul, the Christian Church lost its brightest luminary. One whose faith, devotion, learning, humility, temperance, disinterestedness, kindness, charity, zeal, patience, and fidelity were unequalled. No danger, no weariness, nor pain, ever caused him to rest from his labours. Above every difficulty he rose trium-

phant, though the trials he passed through were far greater than those which ordinarily fall to the lot of man. He himself gives a catalogue of the sufferings he had endured up to the time he wrote his second epistle to the Corinthians, which epistle was sent two or three years before he was shipwrecked on the coast of Malta. He says, "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness."¹ But these things were of little consequence to one who could with truth say that he took pleasure in infirmities, in persecutions, and in distresses for Christ's sake, and that he counted not his life dear to himself, so that he might finish his course with joy.

The execution of St Paul took place, it is believed, on the 29th of June, A.D. 66, in the sixty-eighth year of his age. He was buried in the Via Ostiensis, about two miles from Rome. Over

¹ 2 Cor. xi. 24-27.

layed doing so longer than he had intended, partly from a wish to hear how they had received his epistle before seeing them. After leaving Ephesus he went to Troas, hoping there to meet Titus and learn from him tidings of the Corinthian Christians. He was, however, disappointed; he says, "I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia."¹ There Titus met his spiritual father, whom he cheered by his account of the manner in which he had been received by the brethren at Corinth. From Macedonia Paul wrote his Second Epistle to the Corinthians; in it he justifies himself for having written to them before as he had done, and expresses the joy he felt that Titus was able to give such a promising account of many of them. He wrote upon other subjects, which want of space prevents my noticing.

The Epistle to the Galatians was written about the year A.D. 52. The design of it is much the same as that of the Epistle to the Romans, namely, to teach that justification is by faith alone, and to convey various instructions for Christian behaviour.

The Epistle to the Ephesians was written during the Apostle's first imprisonment in Rome, and has always been greatly admired both for the import-

¹ 2 Cor. ii. 13.

ance of its matter, and for the elegance of its composition.

Of all the Churches, none seem to have cherished a more tender concern for the noble and self-denying Paul than that of Philippi. He wrote his Epistle to the Philippians from Rome. The design of it was to confirm their faith, to encourage them to remain steadfast, and to caution them against the intrusion of false teachers.

The Epistle to the Colossians was written from Rome, and is very similar to that sent to the Ephesians.

The First Epistle to the Thessalonians is supposed to have been the first Paul penned. The Apostle had been much cheered by the account Silvanus (Silas) and Timothy had brought him to Corinth of the Thessalonians, and he wrote to them guarding them against being turned aside by the persecution of unbelieving Jews, and exhorted them to purity, justice, love, and quietness.

The Second Epistle to the Thessalonians was written very shortly after the first.

Next follow the Epistles to Timothy, to Titus, and to Philemon.

Last in the list is the Epistle to the Hebrews, which is supposed to have been addressed to the Jewish Christians in Palestine. The chief object of this epistle was to show the deity of Jesus

Christ, and that his religion is much more excellent and perfect than that of Moses.

Of the epistles of St Paul it has been remarked, that "the more they are studied, and the better they are understood, the more they will be admired to the latest posterity, for the most sublime and beautiful, the most pathetic and impressive, the most learned and profound specimens of Christian piety, oratory, and philosophy." *

* Horne's Introduction.

THE END.



